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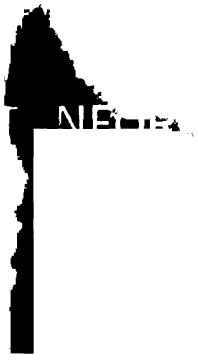

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Revd. J.H. Abraham
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Morte Arthure.

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Morte Arthure.

EDITED FROM

ROBERT THORNTON'S MS. (AB. 1440 A.D.)

IN THE LIBRARY OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL,

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PREFACE.

It is confessedly almost impossible to fix on the exact point of time when the Semi-Saxon dialect, which had replaced the more formal Anglo-Saxon after the Norman Conquest, passed into the *Early English*. Those characteristic changes which constitute the *modernization* of a language were proceeding gradually. Inflections were being lost, distinctive marks of gender and case neglected, variations of meaning coming to be expressed rather by combinations of words than by changes in the words themselves, and the result was that about the middle of the thirteenth century England was speaking a language differing by a wide interval from that of the country three centuries before. This *Early English* stage of the language may be considered to extend from about the beginning of the reign of Henry III. to the end of that of Edward III., when it was succeeded by the *Middle English*.[1] During the whole of this period continual modification of the English tongue was going on. The language of the proclamation to the people of Huntingdonshire differs greatly from the language of Chaucer, and even from

[1] See Dr. Latham on "The English Language," chap. iii.; and "Hallam's Introduction to Literature of Europe," chap. i.

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that of Piers Plowman and of the poem which is here put forth. It is probable that the Morte Arthure is somewhat later in date than Piers Plowman, but that it still falls within the period marked out for the limits of *Early English*. In comparing together the writings of this date we are at once struck by a distinction which seems to separate them into two classes. In Chaucer we see the tendency towards foreign words and idioms, and the adoption of the rhyming metre invented during the decay of the Latin tongue; in Piers Plowman and the Morte Arthure we trace the prevalence of the Saxon words and rhythm, the alliterative[1] or accented metre being preferred to the final cadence.

In the judgment of Warton the latter style was an evident and palpable barbarism. This critic severely censures the author of Piers Plowman, and, but that he was unacquainted with the Morte Arthure, would doubtless have included its author also in his condemnation—"Instead of availing himself of the rising and rapid improvements of the English language Longland prefers and adopts the style of the Anglo-Saxon poets. Nor did he make these writers the models of his language only: he likewise imitates their alliterative versification, which consisted in using an aggregate of words beginning with the same letter. But this imposed constraint of seeking identical initials and the affectation of obsolete English, by demanding a constant and necessary departure from the natural and obvious forms of expression, contributed also to render his manner extremely perplexed, and to disgust the readers with obscurities."[2] It is hoped that the readers of the following poem will not be so

[1] "Alliteration is the general character of all the early Gothic metres."—*Latham*.
[2] Warton's History of English Poetry, i. 266.

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readily disgusted; those very obscurities which were so distasteful to the polite critic constituting some of the chief recommendation of the composition. It is hoped also that the poem will be welcomed not only on philological and grammatical grounds, but on the ground also of its own intrinsic merit —for the fire, vigour, and liveliness of its style, and the vast profusion of descriptive epithets which it pours out before the reader.

This version of the Morte Arthure is printed from a manuscript in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, commonly known as the "Thornton Romances." It is a thick volume containing several poems of the Arthur type, as well as many pieces in prose, both English and Latin. The greater part of this volume was written by Robert Thornton, a native of Oswaldkirk, in Yorkshire, and Archdeacon of Bedford in the Diocese of Lincoln, about the middle of the fifteenth century. The date of Archdeacon Thornton and his connection with Lincoln Cathedral can be ascertained pretty accurately, as among the archives of the Cathedral there is preserved an instrument or deed of considerable importance, attested by him as Archdeacon, which bears date 1439.[1]

So valuable is this collection of ancient pieces which has been preserved by the labour of the Archdeacon, that doubtless all lovers of antiquity will be willing to concur in the wish with which the Morte Arthure concludes, "Thornton dictus sit benedictus." The poem with which we are now concerned was first published from the Lincoln manuscript by Mr. Halli-

[1] This instrument is known by the name of the "*Laudum* of Alnwick," and to this day every Prebendary of the Church takes oath on his admission to observe it. It is a decree (*id quod laudatum est*, approved or determined) of Bishop Alnwick, in reference to certain matters in dispute between the Dean and the Canons.

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well in the year 1847. The form which was then adopted was that of an expensive quarto, and the value of the book was sought to be further enhanced by a rigid limitation of the issue to seventy-five copies. These have all, probably, long ago found their way into the great libraries of the country, and the poem has become as inaccessible to the general reader as though it had never been printed. Under these circumstances the Committee of the Early English Text Society have judged it desirable that a re-publication of the poem should be made. The present edition differs from that of Mr. Halliwell in the printing of two of his lines in one, in the marking by italic letters all expansions of the manuscript contractions, and the addition of side-notes and a glossary. In the first of these points the arrangement of the manuscript is followed, the lines being always written there as here printed. A comparison of the two methods will also, it is thought, result in a decided preference, as regards rhythm, of the method here used. With respect to the expansions of the contractions, it will be observed that there is no regularity in the spelling used, a final *e* being sometimes appended to words, sometimes not. Great care has, in fact, been taken to reproduce exactly the *irregularity* which is one of the most marked features of the spelling of this manuscript. In no case has a final *e* been added unless indicated by a strong and decided mark; while the threefold variation in the writing of words beginning with *th* has been carefully followed.[1] The form of

[1] *The, This, That, Thus, Thou, Thi, These*, etc., are sometimes written in this manuscript as at present spelled, sometimes with the Y and the final letter put over it, sometimes with the Y and the other letters following in a line; *e.g.* That, Y^{t}, Yat, This, Y^{s}, Yis. In the second of these cases the letters are printed in italic; in the third in roman type.

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the thorn letter (þ) has been adopted in the printing, instead of the form used in the manuscript (Y), as it has been thought more agreeable to the date of the composition, and more in unison with the other publications of the same period printed by the E.E.T.S. There can be no doubt that the two forms represent substantially the same sound. The text having undergone several careful collations with the manuscript, it is hoped that it is as near perfect as may be. In some few points it will be found to differ from the very accurate edition of Mr. Halliwell.

As to the poem itself, it is held by Sir F. Madden that this is the "Gret gest of Arthure" composed by Huchowne, a Scotch ballad writer of the fourteenth century. This opinion is combated by Mr. Morris in his Preface to "Alliterative Poems," who proves that the poem was not originally written in the Scotch dialect, but in one of the Northumbrian dialects spoken South of the Tweed. Mr. Morris is also of opinion that the text of the poem had been considerably altered by a Midland transcriber before it fell into the hands of Robert Thornton. Thornton, as a Northumbrian, would probably have preferred the original reading, but finding the manuscript with its Southern modifications, he transcribed it as it stood, without attempt at restoration. In spite, however, of his having yielded to the changes of Southern transcribers, it is certain that we owe to Robert Thornton, of Oswaldkirk, a great debt of gratitude for having made a copy of the poem which has survived to our day. It is a grand specimen of Early English poetry, exhibiting some fine traits common to the early poetry of many nations, and certain special peculiarities of its own which are well worth careful study.

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In almost all early poetry may be noted a simplicity of language united with what may be termed a recklessness of assertion and a contempt of the conditions required for constituting the probable. Effect is sought to be produced not by the subtle analysis of thought and feeling, nor by the description of scenery and natural objects, but by the crowding together of startling incidents, and the ascription of marvellous powers and prowess to the favoured hero. Early poetry is, as it were, the expression of inexperience, of thoughtlessness and light-heartedness, not bearing the marks of a complicated state of society, where the restless struggle for social superiority absorbs the energies and gives a grave cast to the reflections. Now this gay and light-hearted character seems to be eminently characteristic of the Morte Arthure. The ease with which "fifty thousand of folke are felled at ones" when they stand in the way of the victory of the knights; the jovial vein in which Arthur cleaves asunder the giant Colapas, bidding him come down and "karpe to his feris," for that "he is too high by half" to do so comfortably in his giant form; the character of Sir Gawaine, "the gude man of arms," who is so eminent a favourite with the poet because he was "the gladdest of othire,"

"And the hendeste in haule undire hevene riche,"

all testify to this.

And united with this light-hearted vein the least glimpse at the poem will reveal the noble contempt for the probable which it exhibits. Illustration of this is unnecessary, as the whole poem illustrates it. The author might indeed plead that he was not responsible for the "facts;" that he took them from good authority, even from the grave historian, Geoffrey of Monmouth, who has duly chronicled, in choice mediæval Latin,

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the adventures of Arthur and his wars with "Sir Lucius." And, truly, few readers of the poem would desire him to have been possessed of a greater critical acumen, and to have set to work to discriminate, select, and weigh probabilities. Better is it to have the original romance in all its richness and raciness, than any amended or more respectable version of the deeds of the "rich king." Arthur is here a "kydd conqueror" throughout; even in his final conflict inflicting poetical justice on the villain Modred, and dying happily among his people, with the nation sorrowing at his tomb. But in this poem, not only is a grand romance given in highly-spirited diction; there are also passages which show a keen appreciation of the beauties of nature, and others which breathe a truly touching pathos. Of the first character especially are the descriptions of the river banks and woodland copse through which Arthur and his knights ride when they go to combat the giant,[1] and of the spot chosen for the midday halt by the party headed by Sir Florent.[2]

[1] Thane they roode by that ryver, that rynnyd so swythe,
Thare the ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez;
The roo and the rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
In ranez and in rosers to ryotte thame selvene.
All the feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
Fore thare galede the gowke one grevez fulle lowde.
Of the nyghtgale notez the noisez was swette,
They threpide with the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
That whate swowynge of watyr, and syngynge of byrdez,
It myghte salve hyme of sore, that sounde was nevere!
—(ll. 920-932.)

[2] And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
In swathes sweppene downe fulle of swete floures:
Thare unbrydilles theis bolde, and baytes theire horses,
To the grygynge of the daye, that byrdes gane synge;
Whylles the surs of the sonne, that sonde es of Chryste,
That solaces alle synfulle, that syghte has in erthe.
—(ll. 2506-2512.)

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Of the latter, Arthur's beautiful lament over Sir Gawaine,[1] and his touching reflections on his dead knights.[2] The writer of this romance was assuredly not wanting in the feeling of true poetry, while his vigorous diction and his extraordinary power of heaping epithets upon epithets prove great skill and proficiency in the difficult style of versification which he had adopted. As specimens of this vigour and life we can, perhaps, adduce no better instances than the account of the banquet given to the Romans,[3] and of the embarcation of Arthur's army.[4]

[1] Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I levede!
For nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide!
Here es the hope of my hele, my happynge of armes!
My concelle, my comforthe, that kepide myne herte!
Of alle knyghtes the kynge that undir Criste lifede.
My wele and my wirchipe of alle this werlde riche
Was wonnene thourghe Sir Gawaine, and thourghe his witte one!
—(ll. 3957-3965.)

[2] Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,
Rebukkede with a rebawde, and rewthe es the more!
I may helples one hethe house be myne one,
Alles a wafulle wedowe that wanttes hir beryne!
I may werye and wepe, and wrynge myne handys,
For my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever!
Of alle lordchips I take leve to mye ende!
Here es the Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
And nowe in this journee alle my joye endys!
—(ll. 4283-4292.)

[3] Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde,
Grett swannes fulle swythe in sylveryne chargeours,
Tartes of Turky, taste whane thame lykys;
Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste;
Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches,
Fesauntes enflureschit in flammande silver,
With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe.
—(ll. 182-199.)

[4] Coggez and crayers, than crossez thaire mastez,
Wyghtly one the wale thay wye up thaire ankers.
Holly with-owttyne harme thay hale in bottes,
Schipe-mene scharply schotene thaire portez,

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One of the most prominent marks of the style of this poem is the "stereotyped" epithet: "the rich king," "the kydd conqueror," "faire stedes," "galyard knights," "cruel words," Sir Cador "the kene," Sir Bedwere "the rich," Sir Gawaine "the good," are constantly recurring. We recognize one of the marked peculiarities of the great father of epic, who wrote of the "swift-footed Achilles," the "glancing-plumed Hector," the "many-murmuring sea," "horse-feeding Argos," and the "long-haired Greeks." The unartificial nature of early poetry allows the constant recurrence of the same ideas. The epithet is rather part of the subject than a predicate, and the main business of the poem being not so much description as narration, there seems a fitness in the hero being constantly kept before our eyes as the possessor of certain attributes, while the great deeds which justify his "style and title" are recorded.

Another noteworthy peculiarity in the poem is the use of the adjective with the demonstrative pronoun without the substantive, *e.g.* "tha steryne," "this sorrowfulle," "that hathelle," "this kene," "that realle." This, which is akin to the Latin use, marks a stage of the language which has long passed away. Of a like character is the idiom common in this poem of putting the objective case of the pronoun before the verb—"ȝif *me* the life happene," "that *him* over land folowes." Observable also is the constant recurrence of the indefinite expressions "when he likes," "when they like," etc. Not only the stereotyped epithet, but the stereotyped phrase also, occurs regularly in

> **Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene ther depez,**
> **Lukkez to the lade-sterne whene the lyghte faillez,**
> **For drede of the derke nyghte thay drecchede a lyttille,**
> **And alle the steryne of the streme strekyne at onez.**
> —ll. 738–755.)

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certain connections, and sometimes gives a highly ludicrous turn to the narrative by its inappropriateness to the sense.

The strong ecclesiastical tone which pervades the poem will not fail to be noticed by any reader. Not only are the dying knights duly attended by a confessor, shriven and comforted with the last Sacraments, but there is observable in several passages a most zealous care against interfering with the goods of the "spiritualty." When a grant is made of a city it is only "the temporall" which is granted, and the way in which Arthur is made to say

> "I gyffe my protteccione to alle the pope landez,
> It is a foly to offende oure fadyr undire Gode,
> Owther Peter or Paule tha postles of Rome.
> ȝiff we spare the spirituelle, we spede bot the bettire,"

sufficiently speaks for itself.

The Editor desires to express his thanks to Mr. R. Morris for his valuable help in preparing the Glossary.

On the rhythm of the alliterative metre a paper has been kindly communicated by the Rev. W. W. Skeat, M.A., of Christ's College, Cambridge, who has made English metre his especial study. This is here subjoined.

It is only needful further to state that one sheet of the poem having been inadvertently sent to the press before the final collation with the manuscript was made, a list of *corrigenda* (most of them unimportant) has to be supplied.

WADDINGTON RECTORY,
September, 1865.

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ON THE METRE OF THE POEM.

The metre in which the "Morte Arthure" is written may best be understood by comparing it with "Piers Plowman," the accentuation and *swing* of the verse being much better marked in the last-mentioned poem. The principles which govern this peculiar metre may thus be more readily discerned, and, when once understood, may easily be applied to the present poem.

For a similar reason, it will be the simplest method to consider, first of all, a few lines (of "Piers Plowman") where the metre is most strongly marked, and, afterwards, some where it is, apparently, less regular.

It should first, however, be observed that each complete line in an alliterative poem consists generally of two *sections*, which were separated in old manuscripts by a dot, called the *metrical point* or *pause*, and which may conveniently be denoted by a colon (as in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms), thus :—

"Schelde us fro schamesdede: and sinfulle werkes;"

or else by printing the lines thus :—

"Schelde us fro schamesdede,
And sinfulle werkes."

In reading aloud a pause may conveniently be made between the sections.

The two sections form, however, but one complete line; and, as the metrical point is more necessary when the poem is to be sung or recited than when it is merely to be read, it has not been thought necessary to insert it in this edition, as the reader, when he has once caught the rhythm of the verse, may always be tolerably sure as to where it must occur.

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To begin, then; consider the line—

"In séttynge and sówynge
Swónken ful hárde."
—*Piers Plowman;* ed. Wright, l. 41.

If we use an asterisk to denote a strongly-accented[1] syllable, the figure 1 to denote a *single* unaccented syllable, the figure 2 to mean *two* unaccented syllables immediately succeeding each other, and so on; we may represent the above line by the scheme,

1 * 2 * 1 : * 2 * 1;

and this may be taken as a convenient type of alliterative lines, from which the scansion of very many others may be readily deduced. Some, however, as will be shewn presently, must be referred to a type somewhat different.

Now, we here observe (1) that each section contains two strong accents; (2) that, of the strongly-accented syllables, three begin with a common letter, which has been called the *rime-letter;* and (3) of these three, two occur in the first section, and one in the second. Such is the usual and normal arrangement. The *rime-letters* may be either consonants or vowels, and may consist of *single* letters, or of such combinations as *sc, bl, tr*, etc. If vowels, it is sufficient that they *are* so; they need not be the *same* vowels, and, in practice, are generally *different*.

Again, the last strongly-accented syllable in the line does *not* begin with the rime-letter. This also is the usual and more correct arrangement.

Having once this typical form to refer to, it is easy to enumerate most of the changes which may arise. Let us now take the line,

"Hire[2] mésse and hire mátyns,
And mány of hire hoúres."
—*Piers Plowman*, l. 193.

We have here the arrangement

1 * 2 * 1 : 1 * 3 * 1

[1] I use the term *strongly*-accented advisedly, all accents not being equal. Thus, in the line—

"On the oát-grass and the swórd-grass, and the búlrush in the póol,"

the syllables marked are *strongly*-accented.

[2] "Hire is a monosyllable."—*Guest on English Rhythms;* ed. 1838, p. 34.

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which shews (1) that an unaccented syllable may be introduced at the beginning of the second section; and (2) that the number of intermediate unaccented syllables may be readily increased to *three*.

Now herein lies the peculiar freedom and elasticity of alliterative verse; we shall soon find by observation that, under certain circumstances, as many as *four* short unaccented syllables (even if they contain among them one that *is* accented *slightly*) may be inserted at pleasure between the emphatic syllables without destroying the rhythm; for it is one addressed to the *ear* only, and not to the *eye*. The chief point which the poet has to take care of is that when he introduces a larger number of unaccented syllables, they should be capable of rapid enunciation, lest the verse seem clogged and unmusical. An example may be seen in the lines,

"Fáiteden for her fóode,
Foúghten at the ále."
—*Piers Plowman*, l. 83.

Which may be denoted by

* 4 * 1 : * 3 * 1

It would take up too much space to explain here the true method of scanning the lines by division into feet; it may suffice to say that the *general effect* of the metre is *dactylic*, supposing the term *dactyl* to be capable of application to an *English* foot, which, to speak strictly, it is not. Indeed, the nomenclature of English prosody is in sore need of alteration. Neither is there space to explain, and to account for, the curious variations which may further be made in the alliterative metre. The view here given is only an approximate one, which will be found useful in practice. A longer pasage may exemplify it better—

"I lóked me on my léft half
As the lády me taúghte,
And was wár of a wómman
Wórthilich y-clóthed,
Púrfiled with pélure,
The fýnest upon érthe,
Y-córouned with a córoun,
The kýng hath none bétter;
Fétisliche hyr fingres
Were frétted with góld wyr."
—*Piers Plowman*, l. 892.

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Analysis:

1	*	4	*	1	:	2	*	2	*	1
2	*	2	*	1	:		*	3	*	1
	*	3	*	1	:	1	*	3	*	1
1	*	4	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1
	*	3	*	1	:	1	*	2	*	1

One variation, however, found oftenest in the first section, is too important to be passed over. It is that we sometimes find in a section a *third* strongly-accented syllable, thus giving to the line a rather unwieldy length; as in,

"The móoste mischief on mólde
Is móuntynne wel fáste."
—*Piers Plowman*, l. 133.

This third accent is often very awkwardly placed, as in the first line of "Morte Arthure,"

"Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym selvene."

Other noticeable deviations from the strict type may be briefly indicated.

(1) The syllable beginning with the rime-letter is sometimes unemphatic; as in "Morte Arthure," l. 59,

"In Glamórgan with glée: thare glâdschip was évere."

(2) Sometimes there are but *two* rime-letters, as in l. 80,

"So cóme in sódanly; a sénatour of Róme."

(3) Sometimes there is *no* alliteration, as in l. 70. (4) Sometimes there are *four* rime-letters, as l. 32, where all belong to accented syllables,

"Scáthylle Scóttlande by skýlle: he skýstys as hym lýkys;"

or as in l. 35, where one belongs to an unaccented syllable,

"Hólaund and Hénawde: they hélde of hym bóthe."

It will now be sufficient, perhaps, to indicate what is probably the correct accentuation of the first fourteen lines, as this will enable the reader to perceive in them a certain vigorous *swing* (well suited for the ballad-reciter), which will suggest the scansion of most other lines, though there is always somewhat of difficulty in it, from the fact that we have now-a-days changed the accentuation of many words, and cannot be quite certain about the final *e*'s.

"Now grétt glórious Gódd: thurgh gráce of hym sélvene,
And the précious práyere: of hys prýs móder

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Schélde us ffro schámesdede : and sýnfulle wérkes,
And gýffe us gráce to gýe : and góverne us hére
In thys wréchyd wérld : thorowe vért[u]ous lýwynge
That we may káyre till hys coúrte : the kyngdome of hévyne,
Whene oure sáules schall párte : and súndyre ffra the bódy
Ewyre to bélde and to býde : in blýsse with hyme sélvene ;
And wýsse me to wérpe owte : some wórde at this týme,
That nothyre vóyde be ne váyne : bot wýrchip tille hyme sélvyne ;
Plésande and prófitabille : to the póple þat theme héres.
Þe that líste has to lýth : or lúffes for to hére
Off élders of álde tyme : and of their áwke dédys,
Hów they were léle in their láwe : and lóvede Gód Almýghty," etc.

The accentuation of the last two lines is a little doubtful. There may have been an accent on the second *of* in l. 13, owing to its position and the fact of its beginning with a rime-letter; while in l. 14 we have the rather unusual number of six accents, unless "how" was slurred over.

After all, the best way of perceiving the rhythm is to read over some fifty lines several times till they seem quite familiar, and then to read them over once more *out loud*, with strong emphasis on the verbs, substantives, and adjectives, and with a natural and free pronunciation.

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CORRIGENDA.

The Roman e at the end of the following words should be read *e* Italic:—Falterde, line 1092; schovelle-fotede, 1098; schowande, 1099; yryne, 1105; alle, 1105, 1253, 1310, 1323; ffulle, 1112, 1125, 1346, 1520, 1576; evylle, 1116; wapyne, 1119; harde, 1135; balefulle, 1136; wrythynge, 1141; forfetede, 1155; howelle, 1180; irene, 1186; christene, 1187; wapene, 1193; whilles, 1197; thare-ine, 1254; wille, 1257; hym-selvene, 1304; mene, 1315; castelles, 1339; lytille, 1423; kynge, 1507; salle, 1511; takyne, 1519; wille, 1556; selfene, 1560; one, 1573; salle, 1575.

To the following words an Italic *e* should be appended:—Kyng, 1106, 1110, 1127, 1263; feyed, 1114; tung, 1250; howsyng, 1284.

In the following words the *n* should be read Italic:—Accoun*n*tes, 1102; sergeau*n*t, 1173; presonne, 1632.

In the following the syllable *er* should be read Italic:—Over, 1142; sover*ay*gne, 1167; glet*er*ande, 1280; delyv*er*de, 1548.

In the following the syllable *ur* should be read Italic:—*ȝour*, 1480; Pet*ur*, 1519.

For	skyste,	92, 1643,	*read*	skyfte.
,,	a*per*ty,	212,	,,	a p*ar*ty.
,,	arou*u*ede,	340,	,,	arou*m*ede.
,,	knelande,	1137,	,,	kneland.
,,	Lucius,	1267,	,,	Luci*us*.
,,	unfawghte,	1306,	,,	unsawghte.
,,	be,	1327,	,,	bee.
,,	salle,	1364,	,,	sable.
,,	breme,	1380,	,,	brene.
,,	entters,	1499,	,,	enters.
,,	heyn*n*e,	2436,	,,	he*þ*une (?).
,,	well*e*,	2706,	,,	well*es*.
,,	dyghte,	3066,	,,	nyghte.
,,	nyghte,	3267,	,,	dyghte.
,,	lene,	3350,	,,	leve.
,,	ȝee at ȝorke,	3912,	,,	ȝede at ȝoske.

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Morte Arthure.

Here begynnes Morte Arthure. In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Amen pro charite. Amen.

Now grett glorious Godd, thurgh grace of hym selvene,
And the precyous prayere of hys prys modyr,
Schelde us ffro schamesdede and synfulle werkes,
And gyffe us grace to gye, and governe us here,
In this wrechyd werld, thorowe vertous lywynge,
That we may kayre til hys courte, the kyngdome of hevyne,
Whene oure saules schalle parte and sundyre ffra the body,
Ewyre to belde and to byde in blysse with hyme selvene;
And wysse me to werpe owte some worde at this tyme,
That nothyre voyde be ne vayne, bot wyrchip tille hyme selvyne;
Plesande *and* profitabille to the pople þat theme heres.
Ȝe that liste has to lyth, or luffes for to here,
Off elders of alde tyme and of theire awke dedys,
How they were lele in theire lawe, and lovede God Almyghty,
Herkynes me heyndly and holdys ȝow stylle,
And I salle telle ȝow a tale, þat trewe es and nobylle,
Off the ryealle renkys of the rowunde table,
That chefe ware of chevalrye and cheftans nobylle,
Bathe ware in thire werkes and wyse mene of armes,

The poet prays for grace,

and for power to write something profitable.

Ye that list to hear of strange deeds of old,

hearken to a tale of the Round Table.

These knights were noble, wise, and brave,

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Doughty in theire doyngs and dredde ay schame,
kind, and courteous, and worshipful. Kynde mene and courtays, and couthe of courte thewes.
How they whanne wyth were wyrchippis many,
They slew Lucius, lord of Rome, and conquered his kingdom. Sloughe Lucyus þe lythyre, that lorde was of Rome,
And conqueryd that kyngryke thorowe craftys of armes;
Hear now the story. Herkenes now hedyrwarde, and herys this storye.

When King Arthur had won back all the realm of Uther, Qwene that the kynge Arthur by conqueste hade wonnyne
Castelles and kyngdoms, and contreez many,
And he had coverede the coroune of the kyth ryche
Of alle that Uter in erthe aughte in his tyme,
Argyle, Orkney, and the isles Orgayle and Orkenay, and alle this owte iles,
Irelande uttirly, as occyane rynnys;
Ireland and Scotland, Scathylle Scottlande by skylle he skystys as hym lykys,
Wales, Flanders, and France, And Wales of were he wane at hys wille,
Bathe fflaundrez and ffraunce fre til hym selvyne;
had made tributary Holland and Hainault, Burgundy and Brabant, Brittany, Guienne, Gothland and Greece. Holaund and Henawde they helde of hyme bothe,
Burgoyne and Brabane, and Bretayne the lesse,
Gyane and Gothelande, *and* Grece the ryche;
He built Bayonne and Bordeaux, Tours and Toul; Bayone and Burdeux he beldytt fulle faire,
Turoyne and Tholus *with* toures fulle hye;
was prince of Poictiers and Provence, of Valence and Vienne, of Erugia and Aniana, of Naverne and Norway and Normandy. Off Peyters and of Provynce he was prynce holdyne,
Of Valence *and* Vyenne, off value so noble;
Of Eruge *and* Anyone, thos erledoms ryche,
By conqueste fulle cruelle þey knewe hym fore lorde;
Of Germany, of Austria, and many other lands. Of Naverne and Norwaye, and Normaundye eke,
Of Almayne, of Estriche, and o*þer* ynowe;
He conquered all Denmark with his sword. Danmarke he dryssede alle by drede of hym selvyne,
Fra Swynne unto Swether-wyke, *with* his swrede kene!
Then he dubbed his knights and gave them lands. Qwenne he thes dedes had done, he doubbyd hys knyghtez,
Dyvysyde dowcherys and delte in dyv*er*se remmes;
Created kings anointed. Mad of his cosyns kyngys ennoyntede,
In kyth there they covaitte crounes to bere.
Whene he thys rewmes hade redyne and rewlyde the pople,
Then rested the hero, and held the Round Table. Then rystede that ryalle and helde þe Rounde Tabylle;
Suggeo*ur*ns þat sesone to solace hyme selvene,

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In Gretayne þe braddere,[1] as hym beste lykes;
Sythyne wente into Wales with his wyes alle,
Sweys into Swaldye with his snelle houndes,
For to hunt at þe hartes in thas hye laundes,
In Glamorgane with glee, thare gladchipe was evere;
And thare a citee he sette, be assentte of his lordys,
That Caerlyone was callid, with curious walles,
On the riche revare þat rynnys so faire,
There he myghte semble his sorte to see whenne hym lykyde,
Thane aftyre at Carlelele a Cristynmese he haldes,
This ilke kyde conquerour, and helde hym for lorde,
Wyth Dukez and dusperes of dyvers rewmes,
Erles and erchevesqes, and oþer ynowe,
Byschopes and bachelers, and banerettes nobille,
Þat bowes to his banere, buske whene hym lykys:
Bot on the Cristynmesdaye, whene they were alle semblyde,
That comlyche conquerour commaundez hym selvyne
Þat ylke a lorde sulde lenge, and no lefe take,
To the tende day fully ware takyne to þe ende.
Thus one ryalle araye he helde his rounde table,
With semblant and solace and selcouthe metes;
Whas never syche noblay, in no manys tyme,
Mad in mydwynter in þa Weste marchys!
Bot on the newere daye, at þe none evyne,
As the bolde at the borde was of brede servyde,
So come in sodanly a senatour of Rome,
Wyth sextene knyghtes in a soyte sewande hym one.
He saluȝed the soverayne and the sale aftyr,
Ilke a kynge aftyre kynge,[2] and mad his enclines;
Gaynour in hir degre he grette as hym lykyde,
And syne agayne to þe gome he gaffe up his nedys:
"Sir Lucius Iberius, the Emperour of Rome,

After solacing himself in Britain, he goes into Wales,
to hunt the hart with his swift hounds,
and in Glamorgan founds Caerleon upon Usk.
At Caerleon he holds high festival at Christmastide with his lords and bishops,
and bids none depart from the feast till ten days are expired.
Never was so noble a feast known.
But on New Year's day, as the knights were feasting,
there came in suddenly a Senator of Rome,
attended by sixteen knights,
who salutes King Arthur and his knights,
and Guinevre the Queen.
Then, in the name of Sir Lu-

[1] "The More Bretayne Englond is
As men may rede on Cronyclys."
—*Arthur* (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 503.

[2] A tag (†) is appended to these g's, which is taken to indicate a final *e*. Halliwell reads it without the *e*.

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cius Iberius, the Emperor of Rome,

Salu3 the as sugett, undyre his sele ryche;
It es credens, *syr* kyng, *with* cruelle wordez,
Trow it for no trufles, his targe es to schewe!
Now in this new3ers daye *with* notaries sygne,

He summons Arthur to appear at Rome on Lammas day,

I make the somouns *in* sale to sue for þi landys,
That on Lam*m*esse daye thare be no lette ffoundene,
Þat thou bee redy at Rome *with* alle thi rounde table,
Appere *in* his p*re*sens *with* thy price knyghtez,
At pryme of the daye, in payne of 3*our* lyvys,
In þe kydd capytoile before þe kyng selvyne,
Whene he and his senato*urs* bez sette as them lykes,

to answer why he occupies his lands instead of paying homage to him,

To ansuere anely why thow ocupyes the laundez,
That awe homage of alde tille hym *and* his eldyrs;
Why thow has redyne and raymede, *and* raunsound þe pople,
And kyllyde doune his cosyns, kyngys ennoynttyde;
Thare schalle thow gyffe rekkynynge for alle thy round table,

and how he dares to rebel against him.

Why thow arte rebelle to Rome, and rentez theme wytholdez!
3iff thow theis som*m*ons wythsytte, he sendes thie thies wordes,

But if Arthur will not come, the Emperor will invade his land and take him captive,

He salle the seke ov*er* þe see wyth sextene kynges,
Bryne Bretayne þe brade, and bryttyne thy knyghtys,
And bryngе the bouxsomly as a beste *with* brethe whare hym lykes,
That thow ne schalle rowte ne ryste undyr the hevene ryche,
Þofe thow for reddo*ur* of Rome ryne to þe erthe!

and destroy him wherever he may fly.

ffor if thow flee into Fraunce or ffreselaund ow*þer*,
Þou salle be feched *with* force, and oversette for ev*er*!

The Register of Rome declares that Arthur's father paid tribute, which was won by Julius Cæsar and his gentle knights.

Thy fadyr mad fewtee, we fynde in oure rollez,
In the regestre of Rome, who so ryghte lukez:
With-owttyne more trouflyng the trebute we aske,
That Julius Cesar wane wyth his jentille knyghttes!"

Then did king Arthur look with ferocious glance on the Senator.

The kynge blyschit one the beryne with his brode eghne,
Þat fulle brymly for breth brynte as the gledys;

Keste colours as kyng with crouelle lates,
Luked as a lyone, and on his lyppe bytes!
The Romaynes for radnesse ruschte to þe erthe,
fforde ferdnesse of hys face, as they fey were;
Cowchide as kenetez before þe kynge selvyne,
be-cause of his contenaunce confusede theme semede!
Thene coverd up a knyghte, *and* criede ful lowde,[1]
"Kynge coronnede of kynd, curtays and noble,
Misdoo no messengere for menske of þi selvyne,
Sen we are in thy manrede, and mercy þe besekes;
We lenge with syr Lucius, that lorde es of Rome,
That es þe mervelyousteste mane þat on molde lengez;
It es lefulle tille us his likynge tille wyrche;[2]
We come at his commaundment; have us excusede."
Then carpys þe conquerour crewelle wordez,—
"Haa! cravaunde knyghte! a cowarde þe semez!
þare some segge in this sale, and he ware sare grevede,
Thow durste noghte fulle alle Lumberdye lukè one hym ones."
"Sir," sais þe Senatour, "so Crist mott me helpe,
þe voute of thi vesage has woundyde us alle!
Thow arte þe lordlyeste lede þat ever I one lukyde;
By lukynge, with-owttyne lesse, a lyone the semys!"
"Thow has me somond," *quod* þe kyng, "and said what þe lykes;[3]
Fore sake of thy Soveraynge I suffre the þe more;
Sen I coround in kyth wyth crysume enoyntede,
Was never creature to me þat carpede so large!
Bot I salle tak concelle at kynges enoyntede,
Off dukes *and* duspers and doctours noble,
Offe peres of the perlement, prelates *and* oþer,
Off þe richeste renkys of þe rounde table;
þus schalle I take avisemente of valiant beryns,

So terrible was his face that the Romans couched and quailed before him.

Then one of them humbly entreats mercy.

Upon which Arthur upbraids him as a coward.

But the Senator excuses him on the ground that Arthur's visage is very terrible.

The King tells him that he will take counsel of his dukes, doctors, peers, and knights,

[1] *hyghe* in text, erased, and *lowde* written in margin.
[2] The text has *shewe* which has been erased, and *wyrche* written in the margin.
[3] *Likyd* erased and *lykes* written in margin.

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Wyrke aftyre the wytte of my wyes knyghttes:
To warpe wordez in waste no wyrchipp it were,
Ne wilfully in þis wrethe to wrekene my selvene.

while the Romans stay a week to refresh themselves.

For-þi salle þow lenge here, *and* lugge wyth þise lordes,
This sevenyghte in solace, to suggourne ȝour horses,
To see whatte lyfe þat wee leede in thees law laundes."
ffor by þe realtee of Rome, þat recheste was evere,

Sir Cayous is bid to entertain the lords,

He commande syr Cayous, take kepe to thoos lordez,
To styghtylle þa steryne mene as theire statte askys,
That they bee herberde in haste in thoos heghe chambres;
Sythine sittandly in sale servyde ther-aftyr;

and their horses.

That they fynd na fawte of fude to thiere horsez,
Nowthire weyne ne waxe, ne welthe in þis erthe;

He was not to spare, but to feast them liberally.

Spare for no spycerye, bot spende what þe lykys,
That there be largeste one lofte, and no lake foundene;
If þou my wyrchip wayte wy be my trouthe,
Þou salle have gersoms fulle grett, þat gayne salle þe evere!"

And right richly did they fare.

Now er they herberde in hey, *and* in oste holdene,
Hastyly wyth hende mene with-in thees heghe wallez;

Their chambers were furnished with chimneys.

In chambyrs with chympnes þey chaungene þeire wedez,
And sythyne the chauncelere þeme fetchede with chevalrye noble;

The Senator sat at the King's table, and was served like himself,

Sone þe senatour was sett, as hyme wele semyde,
At þe kyngez ownne borde; twa knyghtes hym servede,
Singulere sothely, as Arthure hym selvyne,
Richely on þe ryghte haunde at the rounde table;

for the Romans are of the most royal blood on earth.

Be resoune þat þe Romaynes whare so ryche holdene,
As of þe realeste blode þat reynede in erthe.

Boar's-heads there were served upon silver by numerous gaily dressed attendants.

There come in at þe fyrste course, befor þe kynge selvene,
Barehevedys þat ware bryghte, burnyste with sylver,

Venison, fatted and wild, with choice bread,

Alle with taghte mene and towne in togers fulle ryche,
Of saunke realle in suyte, sexty at ones;
fflesch fluriste of fermysone with frumentee noble
Ther-to wylde to wale, and wynlyche bryddes,[1]

[1] *bredes* erased and *bryddes* written in margin.

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Pacockes and plovers in platers of golde, — peacocks and plovers upon golden plates,
Pygges of porke despyne, þat pasturede never; — sucking pigs,
Sythene herons in hedoyne, hyled fulle faire; — herons in sauce,
Grett swannes fulle swythe in silveryne chargeours, — huge swans,
Tartes of Turky, taste whane þeme lykys; — tarts and conserves,
Gumbaldes graythely, fulle gracious to taste;
Seyne bowes of wylde bores with þe braune lechyde, — hams and brawn in slices,
Bernakes and botures in baterde dysches, — wild geese and ducks,
Þareby braunchers in brede bettyr was never, — young hawks,
With brestez of barowes, þat bryghte ware to schewe,
Seyne come þer sewes sere, with solace þer-after, — various stews and made dishes ornamented brightly,
Ownd of azure alle over and ardant þem semyde,
Of ilke aleche þe lowe launschide fulle hye,
Þat alle ledes myghte lyke þat lukyde þeme apone;
Þane cranes and curlues craftyly rosted, — Cranes and curlews roasted, rabbits served in sweet sauce, pheasants upon silver, curries made to shine bright, and numerous other dainties.
Connygez in cretoyne colourede fulle faire,
ffesauntez enflureschit in flammande silver,
With darielles endordide, and daynteez ynewe;
Þane clarett and Creette, clergyally rennene, — Wine caused to run skilfully in silver conduits.
With condethes fulle curious alle of clene silvyre;
Osay and algarde, and oþer ynewe,
Rynisch wyne and Rochelle, richere was never;
Vernage of Venyce vertuouse and Crete; — Rare sorts served in cups of fine gold.
In faucetez of fyne golde, fonode whoso lykes; — The King's cupboard was glorious with plate.
The kyngez cope-borde was closed in silver,
In grete goblettez overgylte glorious of hewe;
There was a cheeffe buttlere, a chevalere noble,
Sir Cayous þe curtaise, þat of þe cowpe servede; — The chief butler was Sir Cayous,
Sexty cowpes of suyte offore the kyng selvyne,
Crafty and curious corvene fulle faire, — who served the wine in goblets decked with precious stones, which hinder the deadly effects of poison.
In ever-ilk aperty pyghte with precyous stones,
That nane enpoysone sulde goo prevely þer undyre,
Bot þe bryght golde for brethe sulde briste alto peces,
Or ells þe venyme sulde voyde thurghe vertue of þe stones,
And the conqueror hymselvene, so clenly arayede
In colours of clene golde, cleede wyth his knyghttys, — Arthur was clad in cloth of gold

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with his crown on; the doughtiest knight that dwelt on earth.

Drissid *with* his dyademe one his deesse ryche,
ffore he was demyde *þe* doughtyeste *þat* duellyde in erthe.

Then he spake courteous words to those lords.

Thane *þe* conquerour kyndly carpede to *þose* lordes,
Rehetede *þe* Romaynes *with* realle speche,

"Sirs, be of good cheer, we give you the best our barren country affords, which indeed is but poor."

"Sirs, bez knyghtly of contenaunce, *and* comfurthes *ȝour*selvynes,
We knowe noghte in *þis* countre of curious metez;
In thees barayne landez, bredes none o*þer*,
ffore-thy wythowttyne feynyng, enforce *ȝow þe* more
To feede *ȝow with* syche feble as *ȝe* be-fore fynde."

"Sir," sais *þe* Senatour, "so Criste motte me helpe!

"Sir," says the Senator, "Rome itself can show nothing equal to this luxurious feast."

There rygnede never syche realtee *with*-in Rome walles!
There ne es prelatte ne pape, ne prynce in *þis* erthe,
That ne he myghte be wele payede of *þees* pryce metes!"

Then they washed and withdrew to the chamber.

Aftyre theyre welthe *þey* wesche, *and* went un-to chambyre,
Þis ilke kydde conquerour with knyghtes ynewe;

Sir Gawaine leads Guinevere.

Sir Gaywayne *þe* worthye Dame Waynour he hledys;
Sir Owghtreth on *þe* to*þ*er syde of Turry was lorde.

Spiced drinks were served to all.

Thane spyces unsparyly *þay* spendyde there-aftyre,
Malvesye *and* muskadelle, *þase* mervelyous drynkes,
Raykede fulle raythely in rossete cowpes,
Tille alle *þe* riche on rawe, Romaynes *and* o*þer*.

Certain lords were assigned to attend upon the Senator.

Bot the soveraigne sothely, for solauce of hym selvene,
Assignyde to *þe* senatour certaygne lordes,
To lede to his levere, whene he leve askes,
With myrthe *and with* melodye of mynstralsy noble.

Arthur goes to council in the Giant's tower,

Thane *þe* conquerour to concelle cayres there aftyre,
Wyth lordes of his lygeaunce *þat* to hymselfe langys;

with his lords, justices, judges, and gentle knights.

To *þe* geauntes toure jolily he wendes,
Wyth justicez *and* juggez, and gentille knyghtes.

First speaks Sir Cador of Cornwall.

Sir Cador of Cornewayle to *þe* kynge carpes,
Lughe one hyme luffly *with* lykande lates;
"I thanke Gode of *þat* thraa *þat* us *þus* thretys!
Ȝow moste be traylede, I trowe, bot *ȝife ȝe* trett bettyre:

The letters of Sir Lucius, he says, delight his heart.

Þe lettres of *syr* Lucius lyghttys myne herte!

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We hafe as losels liffyde many longe daye,
Wyth delyttes in this land *with* lordchipez many,
And forelytenede the loos þat we are layttede:
I was abaischite, be oure Lorde, of oure beste bernes,
Fore gret dule of deffuse of dedez of armes!
Now wakkenyse *þe* were! wyrchipide be Cryste!
And we salle wynne it agayne be wyghtnesse and strenghe!"
"Sir Cador," *quod* þe kynge, "thy concelle es noble,
Bot þou arte a mervailous mane with thi mery wordez!
ffor thow countez no caas, ne castes no forthire,
Bot hurles furthe appone hevede, as thi herte thynkes;
I moste trette of a trew towchande þise nedes,
Talke of thies tythdands þat tenes myne herte;
Þou sees þat þe Emperour es angerde a lyttille;
Þat semes be his sandismene þat he es sore grevede;
His senatour has sommonde me, and said what hym lykyde,
Hethely in my halle, wyth heynjous wordes,
In speche disspysede me, *and* sparede me lyttille;
I myght noghte speke for spytte, so my herte trymblyde!
He askyde me tyrauntly tribute of Rome,
That tenefully tynt was in tyme of myne elders;
There alyenes, in absence of alle mene of armes,
Coverd it of commons, as cronicles telles;
I have tide to take tribute of Rome,
Myne ancestres ware emperours, and aughte it þeme selvene,
Belyne *and* Bremyne, *and* Bawdewyne the thyrde,
They ocupyede þe empyre aughte score wynnttyrs,
Ilkane ayere aftyre oþer, as awlde mene telles;
Thei coverde þe capitoile, and keste doune þe walles;
Hyngede of þeire heddys-mene by hundrethes at ones;
Seyne Constantyne, our kynsmane, conquerid it aftyre,
þat ayere was of Ynglande, and Emperour of Rome,[1]

They had too long lived a life of inglorious peace.

He rejoices to return again to deeds of arms.

The king praises Sir Cador for his bold words,

spoken from his heart without thought or care.

He himself is grieved at these tidings.

he has been insulted in his own hall by heinous words,

and insolently summoned to pay tribute to the Emperor of Rome,

of whom he ought rather to demand tribute.

His ancestors occupied the Empire of Rome eight score winters.

His kinsman, Constantine, afterwards subdued it—

[1] "For the Emperor Constantine
That was the son of Elyne
That was a Bretone of this lond,
Conquered Rome with his hond."
—*Arthur* (ed. F. J. Furnivall), l. 249.

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he who gained by conquest the true Cross.

284 He þat conquerid þe Crosse be craftez of armes,
That Criste was on crucifiede, þat kyng es of hevene;
Thus hafe we evydens to aske þe Emperour þe same,
That þus regnez at Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes."

Then answered King Aungers and said that Arthur ought to be supreme over all kings.

288 Than[1] answarde kyng Aungers to Arthure hym selvyne,
"Thow aughte to be overlynge over alle oþer kynges,
ffore wyseste, and worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundes,
The knyghtlyeste of counsaile þat ever corone bare;

The Romans had done many evil deeds in Scotland,

292 I dare saye fore Scottlande, þat we theme schathe lympyde,
Whene the Romaynes regnede, þay raunsounde oure eldyrs,
And rade in theire ryotte, and ravyschett oure wyfes,
With-owttyne resone or ryghte refte us oure gudes;

for which he would have revenge.

296 And I salle make myne avowe devotly to Criste,
And to þe haly vernacle vertuus and noble,
Of this grett velany I salle be vengede ones
On ȝone venemus mene, wyth valiant knyghtes!

He promises to bring 50,000 men to aid Arthur.

300 I salle the forthire of defence fosterde ynewe
ffifty thowsande mene, wyth-in two eldes,
Of my wage for to wende, whare so the lykes,
To fyghte wyth thy ffaa mene, þat us unfaire ledes."

The Baron of little Britain would have Arthur return a fierce answer.

304 Thane the burelyche beryne of Bretayne þe lyttylle
Counsayles syr Arthure, and of hyme besekys
To ansuere þe alyenes wyth austerene wordes,
To entyce the Emperour to take overe the mounttes.

308 He said, "I make myne avowe verreilly to Cryste,
And to þe haly vernacle, þat voide schalle I nevere,

He fears the Romans no whit.

ffor radnesse of na Romayne þat regnes in erthe;
Bot ay be redye in araye, and at areste ffoundene,

312 No more dowte the dynte of theire derfe wapyns,
Þan þe dewe þat es dannke, whene þat it doune ffalles;
Ne no more schoune fore þe swape of theire scharpe suerddes,
Then fore þe faireste flour þatt on the folde growes!

He promises to bring 30,000

316 I salle to batelle the brynge, of brenyede knyghtes
Thyrtty thosaunde be tale, thryftye in armes,

[1] *Yan* in MS.

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Wyth-in a monethe daye in-to whatte marche, knights within a month.
Þat þow wylle sothelye assygne, whene thyselfe lykes."
"A! A!" sais þe Walsche kynge, "wirchipid be Criste! Then Arthur exclaims Ah! Ah!
Now schalle we wreke fulle wele þe wrethe of oure elders! Now shall we have revenge.
In West Walys i-wysse syche woundyrs þay wroghte,
Þat alle for wandrethe may wepe, þat one þat were thynkes.
I salle have the avanttwarde wytterly my selvene,
Tylle þat I have venquiste þe Vicounte of Rome, He himself would fight at the head of his army till he had revenged himself on the Viscount of Rome for a villainy he once wrought him at Viterbo.
Þat wroghte me at Viterbe a velanye ones,
As I paste in pylgremage by the Pounte Tremble;
He was in Tuskayne þat tyme and tuke of oure knyghttes,
Areste theme oonryghttwyslye, and raunsound þame aftyre;
I salle hym surelye ensure, þat saghetylle salle we never,
Are we sadlye assemble by oure selfene ones,
And dele dynttys of dethe with oure derfe wapyns!
And I salle wagge to þat were of wyrchipfulle knyghtes, He would take two thousand picked knights.
Of Wyghte and of Walschelande, and of þe Weste marches,
Twa thosande in tale, horsede one stedys,
of þe wyghteste wyes in alle ȝone Weste landys!"
Syre Ewane fytz Uryenee þane egerly fraynez, Then spoke Sir Ewayne and said that they would all follow his command gladly.
Was cosyne to þe conquerour, corageous hym selfene,
"Sir, and we wyste ȝour wylle, we walde wirke þer-aftyre;
ȝif þis journee sulde halde, or be arouuede[1] forthyre,
To ryde one ȝone Romaynes *and* ryott theire landez,
We walde schape us there-fore to schippe whene ȝow lykys."
"Cosyne," *quod* þe conquerour, "kyndly þou asches; Then said Arthur,
ȝife my concelle accorde to conquere ȝone landez, "We will be ready by the kalends of June,
By the kalendez of Juny we schalle encountre ones,
Wyth fulle creuelle knyghtez, so Cryste mot me helpe!
There-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
And to the holy vernacle vertuous and noble,
I salle at Lammesse take leve, to lenge at my large and at Lammas will enjoy ourselves in Lorraine or Lombardy.
In Lorayne or Lumberdye, whethire me leve thynkys;

[1] The reading of this word is somewhat doubtful. Halliwell reads *aprovede*, but there is certainly no trace of a *p* in the MS.

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Merke un-to Meloyne, and myne doune *þe* wallez,
Bathe of Petyrsande, *and* of Pys, and of *þe* Pounte Trēble,
Sojourn six weeks in the Vale of Viterbo,
In *þe* Vale of Viterbe vetaile my knyghttes,
Suggourne there sex wokes *and* solace my-selfene;
and advance skirmishers to Rome unless they offer peace in fitting time."
Send *pr*ekers to *þe* price toune, and plaunte there my segge,
Bot if þay profre me *þe* pece be processe of tyme."
Then Sir Ewayne vows vengeance against the Emperor of Rome for occupying Arthur's heritage,
"Certys," sais *syr* Ewayne, "and I avowe aftyre,
And I *þat* hathelle may see ever with myne eghne,
That ocupies thine heritage, the empyere of Rome,
I salle auntyre me anes hys egle to touche,
þat borne es in his banere of brighte golde ryche,
And raas it frome his riche mene, and ryste it in sondyre,
Bot he be redily reschowede with riotous knyghtez;
I salle enforsse owe in *þe* felde with fresche mene of armes,
and promises 50,000 men on fair steeds.
ffyfty thosande folke apone faire stedys,
On thi ffoo mene to foonde there the faire thynkes,
In ffraunce *or* in ffriselande, feghte whene *þe* lykes!"
Then Lancelot declares his satisfaction at the war.
"By oure Lorde," *quod syr* Launcelott, now lyghttys myne herte!
I love Gode of *þis* love *þis* lordes has avowede!
Nowe may lesse mene have leve to say what theme lykes,
And hase no lettyng be lawe, bot lystynnys *þise* wordez;
I salle be at journee with gentille knyghtes,
On a ramby stede fulle jolyly graythide,
He is ready to joust with the Emperor himself,
Or any journee begane to juste with hym selfene,
Emange alle his geauntez genyvers and o*þer*,
Stryke hym styfflye fro his stede, with strenghe of myne handys,
ffor alle *þa* steryne in stour, *þat* in his stale hovys!
Be my retenu arayede, I rekke bot a lyttille
and to carry the war into Rome.
To make rowtte into Rome, with ryotous knyghtes!
With-in a sevenyghte daye, with sex score helmes,
I salle be seene on the see, saile when *þe* lykes."
Sir Lotez laughs for joy,
Thane laughes *syr* Lottez, and alle one lowde meles,
"Me likez *þat syr* Lucius launges aftyre sorowe;
Now he wylnez *þe* were, hys wandrethe begynnys,

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It es owre weredes to wreke the wrethe of oure elders!
I make myne avowe to Gode, and to þe holy vernacle,
And I may se þe Romaynes, þat are so ryche haldene, — and hopes to see the rich Romans in their pomp,
Arayede in þeire riotes on a rounde felde,
I salle at þe reverence of þe rounde table
Ryde thrughte alle þe rowtte, rerewarde *and* oþer, — that he may cut his way through them and shed their blood.
Redy wayes to make, and renkkes fulle rowme,
Rynnande on rede blode, as my stede ruschez!
He þat folowes my fare, and fyrste commes aftyre,
Salle fynde in my fare waye many ffay levyde!"
Thane þe conquerour kyndly comforthes þese knyghtes,
Alowes þame gretly theire lordly a-vowes,— — Then Arthur praises his knights for upholding his honour.
"Alweldande Gode, wyrchip ȝow alle!
And latte me nevere wanntte ȝow, whylls I in werlde regne;
My menske and my manhede ȝe mayntene in erthe,
Myne honour alle owt utterly in oþer kyngys landes;
My wele and my wyrchipe, of alle þis werlde ryche,
ȝe have knyghtly conqueryde, þat to my corowne langes;
Hym thare be ferde for no faees, þat swylke a folke ledes,
Bot ever ffresche for to fyghte, in felde whene hym lykes.
I acounte no kynge þat undyr Criste lyffes, — While they remain true to him he fears no king on earth.
Whilles I see ȝowe alle sounde, I sette be no more."
Qwhene they tristily had tretyd, thay trumppede up aftyre, — Then the Council broke up.
Descendyd doune with a daunce of dukes and erles; — Music and dancing succeeded,
Thane þey semblede to sale, and sowpped als swythe,
Alle þis semly sorte, wyth semblante fulle noble. — and they all were feasted in the hall.
Thene the roy realle rehetes thes knyghttys,
Wyth reverence and ryotte of alle his rounde table,
Tille seven dayes was gone: þe senatour askes — After seven days the Senator demands his answer for the Emperor.
Answere to þe Emperour with austeryne wordez,
Aftyre þe Epiphanye, whene þe purpos was takyne
Of peris of þe parlement, prelates and oþer.
The kyng in his concelle, curtaise and noblee,
Utters þe alienes, and ansuers hyme selvene:—
"Gret wele Lucius, thi lorde, and layne noghte þise wordes; — Then Arthur bids him greet Lucius

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and tell him that he shall quickly see him in his country;

Ife þow be lygmane lele, late hyme wiet sone
I salle at Lammese take leve, and loge at my large
In delitte in his laundez, wyth lordes ynewe
Regne in my realtee, and ryste whene me lykes,

that he will hold his round table by the river Rhone,

By þe reyvere of Reone halde my rounde table,
ffaunge the fermes in fatthe of alle þa faire rewmes,
ffor alle þe manace of hys myghte, *and* mawgree his eghne!
And merke sythene over the mounttez in-to his mayne londez,

and mine down the walls of Milan,

To Meloyne the mervaylous, and myne doune the walles;
In Lorrayne ne in Lumberdye lefe schalle I nowthire
Nokyne lede appone liffe, þat þare his lawes ȝemes;

ravage Tuscany with his fierce knights,

And turne in-to Tuschayne, whene me tyme thynkys,
Ryde alle þas rowme landes wyth ryotous knyghttes;
Byde hy[m] make reschewes for menske of hyme selvene,
And mette me fore his manhede in þase mayne landes!
I salle be foundyne in Fraunce, fraiste whene hym lykes,
The fyrste daye of fevereere, in thas faire marches!
Are I be fechyde wyth force, or forfette my landes,
þe floure of his faire folke fulle fay salle be levyde!
I salle hym sekyrly ensure, undyre my seele ryche,

and before seven winters are gone besiege Rome,

To seege þe cetee of Rome wyth-in sevene wyntyre,
And that so sckerly ensege apone sere halfes,

and many a senator shall rue his wrath.

That many a senatour salle syghe for sake of me one!
My sommons er certified, and þow arte fulle servyde

The messenger may depart as soon as he pleases.

Of cundit and credense, kayre whene the lykes:
I salle thi journaye engyste, enjoyne theme my selvene,
ffro this place to þe porte, there þou salle passe over;

He must travel to Sandwich in seven days,

Sevene dayes to Sandewyche, sette at the large,
Sexty myle on a daye, þe somme es bott lyttille!

going by Watling-street,

Thowe moste spede at the spurs, and spare noghte thi fole,
Thowe weyndez by Watlyng-strette, and by no waye ells:

stopping at night wherever he may chance to be, tying his horse to a bush by the bridle.

Thare thow nyghttes one nyghte, nedez moste þou lenge,
Be it foreste or felde, found þou no forthire;
Bynde thy blonke by a buske with thy brydille evene,
Lugge þi-selfe undyre lynde, as þe leefe thynkes,

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There awes none alyenes to ayere appone nyghttys,
With syche a rebawdous rowtte to ryot thy selvene.
Thy lycence es lemete in presence of lordys,
Be now lathe or lette, ryghte as þe thynkes,
For bothe þi lyffe and thi lyme lygges þer appone,
þofe *syr* Lucius had laide þe lordchipe of Rome;
ffor be þow foundene a fute with-owte þe flode merkes,
Aftyr þe aughtende day, whene undroune es rungene,
þou salle be hevedede in hye, *and* with horsse drawene,
And seyne heyly be hangede, houndes to gnawene!
The rente ne rede golde, þat un-to Rome langes,
Salle y noghte redily renke, raunsone thyne one!"
"Sir," sais the senatour, "so Crist mot me helpe!
Might I with wirchip wyne awaye ones,
I sulde never fore emperour, þat on erthe lenges,
Ofte unto Arthure ayere one syche nedys;
Bot I am sengilly here, with sex sum of knyghtes;
I be-seke ȝow, *syr*, that we may sounde passe:
If any unlawefulle lede lette us by þe waye,
With-in thy lycence, lorde, thy loosse es cnpeyrede."
"Care noghte," *quod* the kyng, "thy coundyte es knawene
ffro Carlelele to þe coste, there thy cogge lengges;
þoghe thy cofers ware fulle, cramede with sylver,
Thow myghte be sekyre of my sele sexty myle forthire."
They enclined to þe kynge, and counge þay askede,
Cayers owtt of Carelele, catchez one theire horsez;
Sir Cadore þe curtayes kende theme the wayes,
To Catrike þeme cunvayede, *and* to Crist þeme be-kennyde.
So þey spede at þe spoures, þey sprangene þeire horses,
Hyres þeme hakenayes hastyly þere aftyre;
So fore reddour þey redene, and risted theme never,
Bot ȝif they luggede undire lynd, whills þeme lyghte failede;
Bot evere þe senatour for-sothe soghte at þe gayneste,
By þe sevende day was gone þe cetee þai rechide;
Of alle þe glee undire Gode so glade ware þey nevere,
As of þe sounde of þe see and Sandwyche belles!

If after the evening of the eighth day he is found in the country, he shall be hanged up for dogs to eat.

Then the Senator declares that if he can only get well away once, he would never again go on such an errand.

He prays that his retinue may be protected on their way.

Then Arthur tells him that if his coffers were crammed full of silver he would be safe with his passport.

Then did the Romans depart with all speed,

and never rested till they had reached Sandwich by the time prescribed.

Never were they as glad of any thing as of the sound of the sea and Sandwich bells.

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Wythowttyne more stowuntynge they schippide þeire horsez,
Wery to þe wane see þey went alle att ones;
With þe mene of þe walle they weyde up þeire ankyrs,
They crossed the sea to Flanders, And flede at þe fore flude, in Flaundrez þey rowede,
And thorughe Flaundres þey founde, as þeme faire thoghte,[1]
Tille Akyne in Almayne, in Arthur landes;
and over Mount St. Gothard into Lombardy, Gosse by þe Mount Goddarde fulle grevous wayes,
And so in-to Lumberddye lykande to schewe;
through Tuscany to Rome. They turne thurghe Tuskayne, with towres fulle heghe,
In pris appairelles theme in precious wedez;
The sevondaye in suters þay suggourne þeire horsez,
And sekes þe Seyntez of Rome, be assente of knyghtes;
Then the Senator seeks an audience with the Emperor Lucius. Sythyne prekes to þe pales with portes so ryche,
Þare syr Lucius lenges with lordes enowe;
Lowttes to hym lufly, and lettres hym bedes
Of credence enclosyde, with knyghtlyche wordez.
Who asks eagerly for Arthur's answer, and on what ground he resists the power of Rome. Thene the emperour was egree, and enkerly fraynes
þe answere of Arthure; he askes hyme sone
How he arayes þe rewme, and rewlys þe pople;
3if he be rebelle to Rome, whate ryghte þat he claymes:
His ambassador ought to have seized his sceptre and sat above him. "Thow sulde his ceptre have sesede, and syttyne aboune,
ffor reverence and realtee of Rome þe noble:
Arthur, he says, ought himself to have served the Senator. By sertes þow was my sandes, and senatour of Rome,
He sulde fore solempnitee hafe servede þe hym selvene."
Then answers the Senator, that Arthur is too great to do that for anyone. "That wille he never for no waye of alle þis werlde ryche,
Bot who may wynne hym of werre, by wyghtnesse of handes;[2]
Many fey schalle be fyrste appone þe felde levyde,
Are he appere in this place, profre whene þe likes:
I saye the syr Arthure es thyne enmye fore ever,
He claims no less than the Empire of Rome. And ettelles to bee overlynge of þe empyre of Rome,
That alle his ancestres aughte, bot Utere hym-selfe.

[1] *likyd* written first in MS. but erased and *thoghte* written in margin by same hand.

[2] In the short romance of Arthur, the Senator is still more plain-spoken,
"His worthiness, Sir Emperor,
Passes much all youre."—l. 286.

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Thy nedes this newe ȝere, I notifiede my-selfene,
Be-fore þat noble of name *and* neyvesome of kynges;
In the moste reale place of þe rounde table,
I somounde hyme solempnylye, one seeande his knyghtez;
Sene I was formyde in faythe so ferde was I nevere,
In alle þe placez ther I passede of pryncez in erthe!
I wolde fore-sake alle my suyte of segnoury of Rome,
Or I efte to þat soveraygne whare sente one suyche nedes!
He may be chosyne cheftayne, cheefe of alle oþer,
Bathe be chauncez of armes and chevallrye noble,
ffor whyeseste *and* worthyeste, and wyghteste of haundez:
Of alle the wyes þate I watte in this werlde ryche,
The knyghtlyeste creatoure in Cristyndome haldene,
Of kynge or of conquerour, crownede in erthe,
Of countenaunce of corage, of crewelle lates,
The comlyeste of knyghtehode þat undyre Cryste lyffes!
He maye be spokene in dyspens, despysere of sylvere,
That no more of golde gyffes þane of grette stones,
No more of wyne þane of watyre, that of þe welle rynnys,
Ne of welthe of þ[i]s werlde bot wyrchipe allone.
Syche contenaunce was never knowene in no kythe ryche,
As was with þat counquerour in his courte haldene;
I countede at this Crystynmesse, of kyngez enoynttede,
Hole tene at his table, þat tyme with hyme selfene;
He wylle werraye i-wysse, be-ware ȝif þe lykes,
Wage many wyghtemene, and wache thy marches,
That they be redye in araye, and at areste foundyne;
ffor ȝife he reche un-to Rome, he raunsouns it for evere!
I rede þow dreste the þer-fore, and drawe no lytte langere,
To sekyre of þi sowdeours, and send to þe mowntes;
Be þe quartere of this ȝere, and hym quarte staunde,
He wylle wyghtlye in a qwhyle one his wayes hye."
"Bee Estyre," sais þe Emperour, "I ettylle my selfene,
To hostaye in Almayne with armede knyghtez;
Sende freklye into Fraunce, þat flour es of rewmes,
ffande to fette þat freke, and forfette his landez;

He tells the Emperor how he had delivered his message, and that he was never so frightened since he was born.

Arthur is worthy to be king of men for his wisdom and valour.

He is the most famous knight in Christendom.

To him gold and silver are as nothing,

and wine no more than water.

Ten kings anointed feast at his table.

Good need is there of zealous preparation,

and that soldiers should be dispatched to the mountains forthwith.

"By Easter," says the Emperor, "I undertake to be in Germany with an army,

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and will send many giants and mighty men to meet him in the mountains.

ffor I salle sette kepers, fulle covaunde *and* noble,
Many geaunte of geene, justers fulle gude,
To mete hym in the mountes, *and* martyre hys knyghtes,
Stryke þeme doune in strates, and struye theme fore evere,

A post shall be occupied on Mount St. Gothard, with a beacon ready to light,

There salle appone Godarde a garette be rerede,
That schalle be garneschte *and* kepyde *with* gude mene of armes,
And a bekyne abovene to brynne whene þeme lykys,
þat nane enmye *with* hoste salle entre the mountes;

and another on Mount St. Bernard.

There schalle one mounte Bernarde be beyldede anoþere,
Buschede with banerettes and bachelers noble:

He shall not be suffered to enter Pavia."

In at the portes of Pavye schalle no prynce passe,
Thurghe the perelous places, for my pris knyghtes."

Then Lucius sends letters into the East,

Thane *syr* Lucius lordlyche lettres he sendys
Onone in-to þe Oryente, with austeryne knyghtes,
Tille Ambyganye and Orcage, and Alysaundyre eke,
To Inde and to Ermonye, as Ewfrates rynnys,
To Asye, and to Affrike, and Ewrope þe large,
To Irritayne and Elamet, and alle þase owte ilez;
To Arraby and Egipt, tille erles and oþer,
That any erthe ocupyes in þase Este marches;

to demand aid of all the kings and lords.

Of Damaske and Damyat, and dukes and erles,
ffor drede of his daungere they dresside þeme sone;

Quickly they all came, for fear of his might.

Of Crete and of Capados the honourable kyngys
Come at his commandmente, clenly at ones;
To Tartary *and* Turky, whene tythynngez es comene,
They turne in by Thebay terauntez fulle hugge,
The flour of þe faire folke, of Amazonnes landes;

All that failed were to forfeit their lands.

Alle thate ffaillez on þe felde be forfette fore evere!
Of Babyloyne and Baldake the burlyche knyghtes,
Bayous with þeire baronage bydez no langere;
Of Perce and of Pamphile, and Preter Johnne landes,
Iche prynce with his powere appertlyche graythede;
The Sowdane of Surrye assemblez his knyghtes,
ffra Nylus to Nazarethe, nommers fulle huge;
To Garyere *and* to Galelé þey gedyre alle at ones;

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The Sowdanes that ware sekyre sowdeours to Rome,
They gadyrede ov*e*re þe Grekkes see w*i*th grevo*us* wapyns,
In theire grete galays, wyth gleter*a*nde scheldez;
The kynge of Cyprys one þe see þe Sowdane habydes,
W*i*th alle the realles of Roodes, arayede w*i*th hym*e* one:
They sailede w*i*th a syde wynde ovre þe salte strandez:
Sodanly þe Sarezenes, as them*e* selfe lykede,
Craftyly at Cornett the kynges are aryesede,
ffra þe ceté of Rome sexti myle large:
Be that the Grekes ware graythede, a full*e* gret nombyre,
The myghtyeste of Macedone, w*i*th men*e* of þa marches,
Pull*e* and Pruyslande presses w*i*th op*er*,
The lege-m*e*n*e* of Lettow w*i*th legyons ynewe:
Thus they semble in sortes, sum*m*es full*e* huge,
Sowdanes and Sarezenes owt of sere landes,
The Sowdane of Surry and sexten*e* kynges,
At the cetes of Rome assemblede at ones.

Thane yschewes þe Emper*our* armede at ryghtys,
Arayede w*i*th his Romaynes appon*e* ryche stedys;
Sexty geauntes be-fore engenderide w*i*th fendez,
With weches and warlaws to wacchen*e* his tentys;
Ay-ware whare he wendes, wyntrez and ȝeres.
Myghte no blonkes theme bere, thos bustou*s* churlles,
Bot cov*er*de camellez of tou*r*es, enclosyde in maylez;
He ayerez oute w*i*th alyenez ostes full*e* huge,
Ewyn*e* in-to Almayne, þat Arthure hade wonnyn*e*;
Rydes in by þe ryvere, and ryottez hym*e* selven*e*,
And ayeres w*i*th a huge wyll*e* alle þas hye landez;
Alle Westwale of werre he wynnys as hym lykes,
Drawes in by Danuby, and dubbez hys knyghtez;
In the contré of Colome castelles enseggez,
And suggeou*r*nez þat sesone wyth Sarazenes ynewe.

At the utas of Hillary, Syr Arthure hym-selven*e*
In his kydde counc*e*lle commande þe lordes,—
"Kayere to ȝou*r* cuntrez, and semble ȝou*r* knyghtes,
And kepys me at Constantyne clenlyche arayede;

From all the East they came sailing across the Greek Sea in their mighty ships armed for war,

and assembled at Civita, sixty miles from Rome.

There were of Greeks a vast number, and men of Italy, with Saracens from many lands.

Then goes forth the Emperor with his knights.

Sixty giants born of fiends, and witches and warlocks precede him.

Riding upon camels bearing towers,

he marches into Germany, and lays it waste.

Meanwhile Arthur commands his knights to gather their forces, and to be ready to meet him.

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Byddez me at Gareflete apone þa blythe stremes,
Baldly *with*-in borde *with* ȝowre beste beryns;
I schalle menskfully ȝowe mete in thos faire marches."
632 He sendez furthe sodaynly *ser*geantes of armes,
The fleet assembles at Sandwich. To alle hys mariners on rawe, to areste hym schippys;
Wyth-in sextene dayes hys fleet whas assemblede,
At Sandewyche on þe see, saile whene hym lykes.
He holds a Parliament at Yorke, 636 In the palez of ȝorke a *per*lement he haldez,
With alle þe perez of þe rewme, *pr*elates and o*þer*;
And aftyre þe *pre*chynge in *pr*esence of lordes,
The kyng in his concelle carpys þes wordes,—
640 "I am in p*ur*pos to passe *per*ilo*us* wayes,
To kaire *with* my kene mene, to conquere ȝone landes,
To owttraye myne enmy, ȝif aventure it schewe,
That ocupyes myne heritage, þe empyre of Rome.
and appoints as Viceroy Sir Mordred, his nephew. 644 I sett ȝow here a sov*er*aynge, ascente ȝif ȝowe lykys,
That es me sybb, my syst*er* sone, Sir Mordrede hym selvene,
Salle be my levetenante, *with* lordchipez ynewe,
Of alle my lele lege-mene, *þat* my landez ȝemes."
648 He carpes tille his cosyne þane, in cou*n*saile hym selvene,—
"I make the kepare, s*yr* knyghte, of kyngrykes manye,
Wardayne wyrchipfulle, to weilde al my landes,
That I have wonnene of werre, in alle *þis* werlde ryche;
He bids him take care of Queen Guinever. 652 I wyll *þat* Wayno*ur*, my weife, in wyrchipe be holdene,
That hire waunte noo wele, ne welthe þat hire lykes;
Luke my kydde castells be clenlyche arrayede,
and of his castles and forests. There cho maye suggo*ur*ne hire-selfe, wyth semlyche berynes.
656 ffaunde my fforestez be ffrythede, o frenchepe for ev*er*e,
The Queen alone is allowed to hunt in his absence. That nane werreye my wylde, botte Wayno*ur* hir selvene,
And þat in þe sesone whene grees es assignyde,
That cho take hir solauce in certayne tyms
660 Chauncelere and chambyrleyne chaunge as þe lykes,
All officers are to be completely under his command. Audyto*ur*s and offycers ordayne thy selvene,—
Bathe jurecz, and juggez, and justicez of landes,
Luke thow justyfye theme wele that injurye wyrkes:

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If me be destaynede to dye at Dryghtyns wylle,
I charge the my sektour, cheffe of alle oþer, — If Arthur dies Mordred is succeed him.
To mynystre my mobles, fore mede of my saule,
To mendynnantez and mysese in myschefe fallene:
Take here my testament of tresoure fulle huge,
As I trayste appone the, be traye thowe me never! — He bids him be faithful to his trust,
As þow wille answere be-fore the austeryne jugge,
That alle þis werlde wynly wysse as hyme lykes,
Luke þat my laste wylle be lelely perfourmede!
Thow has clenly þe cure that to my coroune langez,
Of alle my werdez wele, and my weyffe eke;
Luke þowe kepe the so clere, there be no cause fondene,
Whene I to contré come, if Cryste wille it thole,
And thow have grace gudly to governe thy selvene,
I salle coroune þe knyghte kyng with my handez." — and promises to crown him king if he remain so.
Than[1] syr Modrede fulle myldly meles hym selvene, [1 *Yan* in MS.]
Knelyd to þe conquerour, and carpes þise wordez,—
"I be-seke ȝow, syr, as my sybbe lorde, — But Mordred desires to be excused,
Þat ȝe wille for charyté cheese ȝow anoþer;
ffor if ȝe putte me in þis plytte, ȝowre pople es dyssavyde;
To presente a prynce astate my powere es symple:
Whene oþer of werre wysse are wyrchipide here-aftyre,
Thane may I forsothe be sette bott at lyttille.
To passe in ȝour presance my purpos es takyne, — and would rather go to the war.
And alle my purveaunce apperte fore my pris knyghtez."
"Thowe arte my nevewe fulle nere, my nurree of olde, — But Arthur bade him, as his nearest of kin, to undertake the office.
That I have chastyede and chosene, a childe of my chambyre;
ffor the sybredyne of me, fore-sake noghte þis offyce
That thow ne wyrk my wille, thow whatte watte it menes."
Nowe he takez hys leve, and lengez no langere,
At lordez, at lege-mene, þat leves hyme byhyndene.
And seyne þat worthilyche wy went un-to chambyre, — Then Arthur takes leave of his Queen.
ffor to comfurthe þe qwene, þat in care lenges;
Waynour waykly wepande hym kyssiz,
Talkez to hym tenderly with teres ynewe,—
"I may wery the wye, that this werre movede, — Guineverlaments his departure,

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That warnes me wyrchippe of my wedde lorde;
Alle my lykynge of lyfe owte of lande wendes,
And I in langour am lefte, leve ȝe for evere!
and would rather die in his arms. Schyne myghte I, dere lufe, dye in ȝour armes,
Are I þis destanye of dule sulde drye by myne one!"
But Arthur bids her not to grieve, "Grefe þe noghte, Gaynour, fore Goddes lufe of hewene,
Ne gruche noghte my ganggynge, it salle to gude turne!
Thy wonrydez and thy wepynge woundez myne herte,
I may noghte wit of þis woo, for alle þis werlde ryche;
I have made a kepare, a knyghte of thyne awene,
and tells her that he has made Mordred, a knight of her own, his deputy. Overlynge of Ynglande undyre thy selvene,
And that es *syr* Mordrede, *þat* þow has mekylle prøysede,
Salle be thy dictour, my dere, to doo whatte the lykes."
Then he kisses the ladies, and takes leave of them. Thane he takes hys leve at ladys in chambyre,
Kysside them kyndlyche, and to Criste be-teches;
But Guinever swooned when he asked for his sword. And then cho swounes fulle swythe, whe[n] he hys swerde aschede,
Twys in a swounyng, swette as cho walde!
The king then departs hastily with his knights. He pressed to his palfray, in presance of lordes,
Prekys of the palez with his prys knyghtes,
Wyth a realle rowte of þe rounde table;
Soughte to-warde Sandewyche, cho sees hyme no more!
Thare the grete ware gederyde, wyth galyarde knyghtes,
At Sandwich all the lords and their followers assemble. Garneschit over þe grene felde and graythelyche arayede;
Dukkes and duzseperes dayntthely rydes,
Erlez of Ynglande with archers ynewe:
Schirreves scharply schiftys the comouns,
Rewlys be-fore þe ryche of the rounde table,
Assignez ilke a contree to certayne lordes,
In the southe one þe see banke saile whene þeme lykes
Horses, arms, tents, clothing, and provisions are shipped. Thane bargez theme buskez, and to þe baunke rowes,
Bryngez blonkez one bourde, and burlyche helmes;
Trussez in tristly trappyde stedes,
Tentez and othire toylez, and targez fulle ryche,
Cabanes *and* clathe sokkes, and coferez fulle noble,
Hukes and haknays, and horsez of armez;

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Thus they stowe ine the stuffe of fulle steryne knyghtez.
Qwene alle was schyppede that scholde, they schounte no lengere,
Bot ventelde theme tyte, as þe tyde rynnez;
Coggez and crayers, þan crossez þaire mastez,
At the commandment of þe kynge, uncoverde at ones.
Wyghtly one þe wale thay wye up þaire ankers,
By wytt of þe watyre mene of þe wale ythez,
ffrekes one þe forestayne, fakene þeire coblez,
In floynes and fercestez, and Flemesche schyppes,
Tytt saillez to þe toppe, and turnez the lufe,
Standez appone stere-bourde, sterynly þay songene,
The pryce schippez of the porte provene theire depnesse,
And fondez wyth fulle saile ower the fawe ythez;
Holly with-owttyne harme þay hale in bottes,
Schipe-mene scharply schotene þaire portez,
Launchez lede apone lufe, lacchene þer depez,
Lukkes to þe lade-sterne whene þe lyghte faillez;
Castez coursez be crafte, whene þe clowde rysez,
With þe nedylle and þe stone one þe nyghte tydez;
For drede of þe derke nyghte þay drecchede a lyttille,
And alle þe steryne of þe streme strekyne at onez:
The kynge was in a gret cogge, with knyghtez fulle many,
In a cabane enclosede, clenlyche arayede;
With-in on a ryche bedde rystys a lyttylle,
And with þe swoghe of þe see in swefnynge he fellе.
Hym dremyd of a dragone, dredfulle to beholde,
Come dryfande one þe depe to drenschene hys pople,
Ewene walkande owte of the Weste landez,
Wanderande unworthyly overe the wale ythez;
Bothe his hede and hys hals ware halely alle over
Cundyde of azure, enamelde fulle faire:
His scoulders ware schalyde alle in clene sylvere,
Schreede over alle þe schrympe with schrinkande poyntez;
Hys wombe and hys wenges of wondyrfulle hewes,
In mervaylous maylys he mountede fulle hye;

Then the ships at the word of command cross their yards,
weigh their anchors;
the well-skilled sailors hoist the sails and steer the vessels.
Then they haul in the boats, shut the ports, heave the lead, look well to the guiding star, and skilfully shape their course by the compass.
After a little delay on account of darkness, they all sail at once.
The king is in a large vessel with many knights,
Reposing himself in his cabin, he falls asleep,
and dreams of a dreadful dragon.
His head and neck were blue;
his shoulders covered with silver scales;
his belly and wings of various hues;

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Whayme þat he towchede he was tynt for ever!
Hys feete ware floreschede alle in fyne sabylle,
his feet were black, and out of his mouth there
And syche a vennymous flayre flowe fro his lyppez,
came flame.
That the flode of þe flawez alle one fyre semyde!
Then there came against the dragon a fierce black bear,
Thane come of þe oryente, ewyne hyme agaynez,
A blake bustous bere abwene in the clowdes,
With yche a pawe as a poste, and paumes fulle huge,
with huge paws and crooked tusks,
With pykes fulle perilous, alle plyande þame semyde,
Lothene and lothely, lokkes and oþer,
mis-shapen legs, and foaming lips.
Alle with lutterde legges, lokerde unfaire;
Filtyrde unfrely wyth fomaunde lyppez,
The foulleste of fegure that fourmede was ever!
He came capering and mocking,
He baltyrde, he bleryde, he braundyschte þer-after;
To bataile he bounez hym with bustous clowez:
roaring and raging for the strife.
He romede, he rarede, that roggede alle þe erthe!
So ruydly he rappyd at to ryot hym selvene!
Then the dragon assailed him, fighting like a falcon with beak and claws.
Thane the dragone on dreghe dressede hyme agaynez,
And with hys duttez hym drafe one dreghe by þe walkyne:
He fares as a fawcone, frekly he strykez;
Bothe with feete and with fyre he feghttys at ones!
The bere in the bataile þe bygger hym semyde,
The bear butts him with his tusks and causes the blood to flow.
And byttes hyme boldlye wyth balefulle tuskez;
Syche buffetez he hym rechez with hys brode klokes,
Hys brest and hys brathelle was blodye alle over!
He rawmpyde so ruydly that alle þe erthe ryfez,
Rynnande one reede blode as rayne of the hevene!
He had killed the dragon but for the fire which he breathes.
He hade wereyde the worme by wyghtnesse of strenghte,
Ne ware it fore þe wylde fyre þat he hyme wyth defendez:
Thane wandyrs þe worme awaye to hys heghttez,
Then the dragon flies aloft, and comes swooping down,
Comes glydande fro þe clowddez, and cowpez fulle evene;
Towchez hym wyth his talonnez, and terez hys rigge,
tearing a vast rent in the back of the bear,
Be-twyx þe taile and the toppe tene fote large!
Thus he brittenyd the bere, and broghte hyme olyfe,
and carrying him off in his claws, lets him drop into the water.
Lette hyme falle in the flode, fleete whare hyme lykes:
So they bryng þe bolde kyng bynne þe schippe burde,
Þat nere he bristez for bale, one bede whare he lyggez.

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Thane waknez the wyese kynge, wery fore-travaillede,
Takes hyme two phylozophirs, that folowede hyme ever,
In the sevyne scyence the suteleste fondene,
The cony[n]geste of clergye undyre Criste knowene;
He tolde þeme of hys tourmente, þat tyme þat he slepede,
"Drechede with a dragone, and syche a derfe beste,
Has mad me fulle wery; ȝe telle me my swefene,
Ore I mone swelte as swythe, as wysse me oure Lorde!"
"Sir," saide þey sone thane, thies sagge philosopherse,
"The dragone þat þow dremyde of, so dredfulle to schewe,
That come dryfande over þe deepe, to drynchene thy pople,
Sothely and certayne thy selvene it es,
That thus saillez over þe see with thy sekyre knyghtez:
The colurez þat ware castyne appone his clere wengez,
May be thy kyngrykez alle, that thow has ryghte wonnyne;
And the tachesesede taile, with tonges so huge,
Be-takyns þis faire folke, that in thy fleet wendez.
The bere that bryttenede was abowene in þe clowdez,
Betakyns the tyrauntez þat tourmentez thy pople;
Or elles with some gyaunt some journee salle happyne,
In syngulere batelle by ȝoure selfe one;
And þow salle hafe þe victorye thurghe helpe of oure Lorde,
As þow in thy visione was opynly schewede!
Of this dredfulle dreme ne drede the no more,
Ne kare noghte, syr conquerour, bot comforth thy selvene;
And thise þat saillez over þe see, with thy sekyre knyghtez."
With trumppez thene trystly, they trisene upe þaire saillez,
And rowes over the ryche see, this rowtte alle at onez;
The comely coste of Normandye they cachene fulle evene,
And blythely at Barflete theis bolde are arryfede,
And fyndys a flete there of frendez ynewe,
The floure and þe faire folke of fyftene rewmez;
ffore kyngez and capytaynez kepyde hyme fayre,
As he at Carelele commaundede at Cristymesse hym selvene.
Be they had takene the lande, and tentez upe rerede,
Comez a templere tyte, and towchide to þe kynge—

Then Arthur awaking was troubled at the dream, and sends for his two philosophers, men very learned in the seven sciences.

These wise men tell him that by the dragon is meant himself and his knights.

The bear signifies the tyrants who torment his people, or else some giant whom Arthur is destined to overthrow in battle.

Arthur is exhorted to be of good courage.

They speed on their way, and arrive on the coast of Normandy.

At Barflete they find a fleet of friends,

the flower of fifteen realms.

When they had disembarked and pitched their tents, a Templar

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comes to the king,

and tells him of a ferocious giant who feeds upon men and children,

"Here es a teraunt be-syde that *tour*mentez thi pople,
A grett geaunte of geen*e*, engenderde of fendez;
He has fretyn*e* of folke mo than*e* fyfe hondrethe,
And als fele fawntekyns of freeborne childyre!
This has bene his sustynaunce all*e* this seven*e* wynttere,
And ȝut es that sotte noghte sade, so wele hym*e* it lykez!
In *þe* contree of Co*n*stantyne no kynde has he levede,
With-owttyn*e* kydd castelles enclosid wyth walles,
That he ne has clenly distroyede alle the knave childyre,
And them*e* caryede to *þe* cragge, and clenly deworyd*e*!

who had that day captured the Duchess of Brittany, and carried her to his den.

The duchez of Bretayne to daye has he takyn*e*,[1]
Beside Reynes as scho rade with hire ryche knyghttes;
Ledd hyre to the mou*n*tayne, thare *þat* lede lengez,
To lye by that lady, aye whyls his lyfe lastez.
We folowede o ferrom*e* moo then*e* fyfe hundrethe,
Of beryns, and of burgeys, and bachelers noble,
Bot he cov*er*de the cragge; cho cryede so lowde,
The care of *þat* creato*ur*e cov*er* sall*e* I nev*er*!

She was the flower of all France, and the fairest lady on earth,

Scho was flo*ur* of all*e* Fraunce, or of fyfe rewmes,
And one of the fayreste that fo*ur*mede was ev*ere*,
The gentileste jowell*e* a-juggede w*ith* lordes,
ffro Geene unto Geron*e*, by Jh*es*u of heven*e*!

cousin of Arthur's Queen.

Scho was thy wyfes cosyn*e*, knowe it if *þe* lykez,
Commen*e* of *þe* rycheste, that regnez in erthe:
As thow arte ryghtwise kyng*e* rewe on thy pople,
And fande for to venge them*e*, that thus are rebuykyde!"

Then Sir Arthur bitterly laments her fate,

"Allas!" said *syr* Arthure, "so lange have I lyffede,
Hade I wytene of this, wele had me chefede;
Me es noghte fallen*e* faire, bot me es foule happynede,
That thus this faire ladye this fende has dystroyede!
I had lev*ere* thane all*e* Fraunce, this fyftene wynt*er*

and wishes he had been there to aid her.

I hade bene be-fore thate freke, a furlange of waye,
When*e* he that ladye had laghte and ledde to *þe* montez:
I hadde lefte my lyfe are cho hade harme lymppyde!

[1] In the short romance of Arthur this unfortunate lady is described as fair Elaine, cousin to King Hoel.

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Bot walde þow kene me to þe crage, thare þat kene lengez. — He desires to know where the giant lives,
I walde cayre to þat coste, and carpe wythe hyme-selvene,
To trete with that tyraunt fore tresone of londes,
And take trewe for a tyme, tille it may tyde bettyre."
"Sire, see ȝe ȝone farlande, with ȝone two fyrez,
Þar filsuez þat fonde, fraist whene the lykes? — and is directed by the Templar how to find his abode,
Appone the creste of the cragge, by a colde welle,
That enclosez þe clyfe with þe clere strandez,
Ther may thow fynde folke fay wyth-owttyne nowmer, — where there are many captives,
Mo florenez in faythe thane Fraunce es in aftyre;
And more tresour untrewely that traytour has getyne, — and vast treasure stored up.
Thane in Troye was as I trowe, þat tyme þat it was wonne."
Thane romyez the ryche kynge for rewthe of þe pople, — Then Arthur is greatly excited,
Raykez ryghte to a tente, and restez no lengere!
He welterys, he wristeles, he wryngez hys handez!
Thare was no wy of þis werlde, þat wyste whatt he menede!
He calles syr Cayous þat of þe cowpe serfede, — and bids Sir Cayous and Sir Bedevere attend him at evening,
And syr Bedvere þe bolde, þat bare hys brande ryche,—
"Luke ȝe aftyre evensange be armyde at-ryghttez,
On blonkez by ȝone buscayle, by ȝone blythe stremez,
ffore I wille passe in pilgremage prevely here aftyre,
In the tyme of suppere, whene lordez are servede,
ffor to sekene a saynte be ȝone salte stremes, — pretending that he is going on a pilgrimage.
In Seynt Mighelle mount, there myraclez are schewede."
Aftyre evesange, Sir Arthure hyme-se[l]fene
Wente to hys wardrope, and warpe of hys wedez; — Then Arthur proceeds to dress and arm himself,
Armede hym in a actone with orfraeez fulle ryche,
Abovene one þat a jeryne of Acres owte over,
Abovene þat a jesseraunt of jentylle maylez,
A jupone of Jerodyne jaggede in schredez;
He brayedez one a bacenett burneschte of sylver,
The beste þat was in Basille, wyth bordurs ryche;
The creste and þe coronalle, enclosed so faire
Wyth clasppis of clere golde, couched wyth stones;
The vesare, þe aventaile, enarmede so faire,
Voyde with-owttyne vice, with wyndowes of sylver;

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His gloves gaylyche gilte, and gravene at þe hemmez,
With grayvez and gobelets, glorious of hewe;
He bracez a brade schelde, and his brande aschez,
and mounting a brown steed, rides to the spot where his knights await him.
Bounede hyme a broune stede, and one þe bente hovys;
He sterte tille his sterepe and stridez one lofte,
Streynez hyme stowttly, and sterys hyme faire,
Brochez þe baye stede, and to þe buske rydez,
And there hys knyghtes hyme kepede fulle clenlyche arayede:
Thane they roode by þat ryver, þat rynnyd so swythe,
There was a grove by the side of the river full of game and decked with flowers.
þare þe ryndez overrechez with realle bowghez;
The roo and þe rayne-dere reklesse thare rounene,
In ranez and in rosers to ryotte þame selvene;
The frithez ware floreschte with flourez fulle many,
Wyth fawcouns and fesantez of ferlyche hewez;
All þe feulez thare fleschez, that flyez with wengez,
Here all birds abounded,
ffore thare galede þe gowke one grevez fulle lowde,
Wyth alkyne gladchipe þay gladdene þeme selvene:
and nightingales in vast numbers made sweet music.
Of þe nyghtgale notez þe noisez was swette,
They threpide wyth the throstills thre-hundreth at ones!
þat whate swowynge of watyr, and syngynge of byrdez,
It myghte salve hyme of sore, that sounde was nevere!
Thane ferkez this folke, and one fotte lyghttez,
Here they leave their horses, and the king bids his knights to await his return.
ffestenez theire faire stedez o ferrome by-twene;
And thene the kynge kenely comandyde hys knyghtez
ffor to byde with theire blonkez, and bowne no forthyre,—
"ffore I wille seke this seynte by my-selfe one,
And melle with this mayster mane, þat this monte ȝemez;
And seyne salle ȝe offyre, aythyre aftyre oþer,
Menskfully at Saynt Mighelle fulle myghty with Criste!"
The king alone ascends the mountain,
The kyng coveris þe cragge wyth cloughes fulle hye,
To the creste of the clyffe he clymbez one lofte;
Keste upe hys umbrere, and kenly he lukes,
Caughte of þe colde wynde to comforthe hym selvene;
Two fyrez he fyndez fflawmande fulle hye,
The fourtedele a furlange be-twene þis he walkes;

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Þe waye by Þe welle strandez he wandyrde hym one,
To wette of Þe warlawe, whare Þat he lengez;
He ferkez to Þe fyrste fyre, and evene there he fyndez
A wery wafulle wedowe, wryngande hire handez,
And gretande on a grave grysely teres,
Now merkyde one molde, sene myddaye it semede:
He saluȝede Þat sorowfulle with sittande wordez,
And fraynez aftyre the fende fairely there aftyre:
Thane this wafulle wyfe un-wynly hym gretez,
Coverde up on hire kneess, and clappyde hir handez;
Said, "carefulle caremane, thow carpez to lowde!
May ȝone warlawe wyt, he worows us alle!
Weryd worthe Þe wyghte ay, that Þe thy wytt refede,
That mase the to wayfe here in Þise wylde lakes!
I warne Þe fore wyrchipe, Þou wylnez aftyr sorowe!
Whedire buskes Þou berne? unblysside Þow semes!
Wenez thow to brittene hyme with thy brande ryche?
Ware thow wyghttere thane Wade or Wawayne owthire,
Thow wynnys no wyrchipe, I warne the be-fore!
Thow saynned the unsekyrly to seke to Þese mountez,
Siche sex ware to symple to semble with hyme one;
ffor and thow see hyme with syghte, the servez no herte,
To sayne the sekerly, so semez hym huge!
Thow arte frely and faire, and in thy fyrste flourez,
Bot thow arte fay be my faythe, and Þat me for-thynkkys!
Ware syche fyfty one a felde, or one a faire erthe,
The freke walde with hys fyste felle ȝow at ones!
Loo! here, the duchez dere, to daye was cho takyne,
Depe dolvene and dede dyked in moldez;
He hade morthirede this mylde be myddaye war rongene,
With-owttyne mercy one molde, not watte it ment:
He has forsede hir and fylede, and cho es fay levede;
He slewe hir un-slely, and slitt hir to Þe navylle!
And here have I bawmede hir, and beryede Þer aftyr,
ffor bale of Þe botelesse, blythe be I never!
Of alle Þe frendrez cho hade, Þere folowede none aftyre,

and going to a fire which he sees he finds a woeful widow wringing her hands.

He asks her concerning the giant.

She answers with terror, and warns him that he cannot hope to contend with so terrible a monster.

Fifty such as Arthur he could fell with his fist.

The poor Duchess had been ravished and murdered by him, and the doleful widow, her foster-mother, had buried her.

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and would remain there till death to bewail her.

Bot I hir foster modyr of fyftene wynter!
To ferke of this farlande, fande salle I never,
Bot here be foundene on felde, tille I be fay levede!"
Thane answers syr Arthure to þat alde wyf;

Then Arthur says that he comes from the great King Arthur on a mission to treat with the giant.

"I am comyne fra the conquerour, curtaise and gentille,
As one of þe hathelest of Arthur knyghtez,
Messenger to þis myx, for mendemente of þe pople,
To mele with this maister mane, that here this mounte ȝemez;
To trete with this tyraunt for tresour of landez,
And take trew for a tyme, to bettyr may worthe."

The old wife tells him that he cares nothing for laws or treaties; that he regards not gold or treasure;

"ȝa, thire wordis are bot waste," *quod* this wif thane,
"ffor bothe landez and lythes ffulle lyttille by he settes;
Of rentez ne of rede golde rekkez he never,
ffor he wille lenge owt of lawe, as hym-selfe thynkes,
With-owtene licence of lede, as lorde in his awene;

only he has a famous kyrtle covered with hair,

Bot he has a kyrtille one, kepide for hyme selvene,
That was sponene in Spayne with specyalle byrdez,
And sythyne garnescht in Grece fulle graythly to-gedirs,
That es hydede alle with hare hally al overe,

which is bordered with the beards of mighty kings,

And bordyrde with the berdez of burlyche kynges,
Crispid and kombide, that kempis may knawe
I the kynge by his colour, in kythe there he lengez;
Here the fermez he fangez of fyftene rewmez,

which are sent to him on each Easter-eve.

ffor ilke Esterne ewyne, how-ever that it falle;
They send it hyme sothely for saughte of þe pople,
Sekerly at þat sesone with certayne knyghtez,

He has long wished for the beard of Arthur, and tried to force the Breton kings to get it for him.

And he has aschede Arthure alle þis sevene wynter.
fforthy hurdez he here, to owttraye hys pople,
Tille þe Bretones kynges have burneschte his lyppys,
And sent his berde to that bolde wyth his beste berynes;
Bot thowe hafe broghte þat berde, bowne the no forthire,
ffor it es butelesse bale, thowe biddez oghte elles;
ffor he has more tresour to take whene hyme lykez,
Than evere aughte Arthure, or any of hys elders;

If he has brought the beard, he may

If thowe hase broghte þe berde, he bese more blythe

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Thane þowe gafe hym Burgoyne, or Bretayne þe more; — be sure of a hearty welcome.
Bot luke nowe for charitee, þow chasty thy lyppes,
That the no wordez eschape, whate so be-tydez; — But he must approach him with due caution,
Luke þat presante be priste, and presse hym bott lytille,
ffor he es at his sowper, he wille be sone grevyde;
And þow my concelle doo, þow doffe of thy clothes, — and had better doff his clothes and kneel to him.
And knele in thy kyrtylle, and calle hym thy lorde;
He sowppes alle þis sesone with sevene knave childre, — His supper at this season is composed of seven male children chopped up with pickles and condiments.
Choppid in a chargour of chalke whytt sylver,
With pekille and powdyre of precious spycez,
And pyment fulle plentevous of Portyngale wynes;
Thre balefulle birdez his brochez þey turne, — Three savage birds act as turnspits for him.
That byddez his bedgatt, his byddynge to wyrche;
Siche foure scholde be fay with-in foure hourez,
Are his fylth ware filled, that his flesch ȝernes."
"ȝa, I have broghte þe berd," *quod* he, "the bettyre me lykez; — "Yea," says Arthur, "I have indeed brought this beard; but show me where I shall find him."
ffor-thi wille I boune me, and bere it my selvene;
Bot lefe walde þow lere me whare þat lede lengez,
I salle alowe þe and I liffe, oure Lorde so me helpe!"
"fferke fast to þe fyre," *quod* cho, "that flawmez so hye; — Then she directs him to approach the great fire.
Thare fillis þat fende hyme, fraist whene the lykez;
Bot thow moste seke more southe, syddynges a lyttille,
ffor he wille hafe sent hym-selfe sex myle large."
To þe sowre of þe reke he soghte at þe gayneste,
Sayned hyme sekerly with certayne wordez,
And sydlynges of þe segge the syghte had he rechide,
How un-semly þat sott satt sowpande hym one; — Arthur goes to the fire, and finds the giant lying extended with his back to the fire, picking the thigh of a man.
He lay levand one lange, bugande un-faire,
þe thee of a mans lymme lyfte up by þe haunche;
His bakke and his bewschers, and his brode lendez,
He bekez by þe bale fyre, and breklesse hyme semede;
þare ware rostez fulle ruyde, and rewfulle bredez, — Roasts of the flesh of children and cattle were spitted together, being prepared for him in various ways.
Beerynes and bestaile brochede to-geders;
Cowle-fulle cramede of crysinede childyre,
Sum as brede brochede, and bierdez þame tournede.

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Then Arthur's heart bleeds for the woes inflicted by this wretch.

And þane this comlych kynge, by-cause of his pople,
His herte bledez for bale, one bent ware he standez!

He fastens on his shield and brandishes his bright sword,

Thane he dressede one his schelde, schuntes no lengere,
Braundesche his brighte swerde by þe bryghte hiltez,
Raykez to-warde þe renke reghte with a ruyde wille,

and right boldly addresses the giant.

And hyely hailsez þat hulke with hawtayne wordez,—
"Now, alle-weldand Gode, þat wyrscheppez us alle,
Giff the sorowe and syte, sotte there thow lygges,

He upbraids him with his vile crimes and his unclean meat.

ffor the fulsomeste freke that fourmede was evere!
ffoully thow fedys the, þe fende have thi saule!
Here es cury un-clene, carle, be my trowthe,
Caffe of creatours alle, thow curssede wriche!

For his horrible murders of christian children,

Be-cause that þow killide has þise cresmede childyre,
Thow has marters made, and broghte oute of lyfe,
þat here are brochede one bente, and brittenede with thi handez,
I salle merke þe thy mede, as þou has myche serfed,

he would now take vengeance on him, by the aid of St. Michael, and give his soul to the devil.

Thurghe myghte of Seynt Mighelle, þat þis monte ȝemes!
And for this faire ladye, þat þow has fey levyde,
And þus forced one foulde, for fylth of þi-selfene!
Dresse the now, dogge, sone, the develle have þi saule!
ffor þow salle dye this day, thurghe dynt of my handez!"

Then the giant stared with amazement, and gnashed his teeth with fury.

Thane glopnede þe glotone and gloredе un-faire;
He grevede as a grewhounde, with grysly tuskes;
He gapede, he groned faste, with grucchande latez,
ffor grefe of þe gude kyng, þat hyme with grame gretez!

Out of his mouth there came smoke, which covered all his face.

His fax and his foretoppe was filterede to-geders,
And owte of his face fome ane halfe fote large;
His frount and his forhevede alle was it over,
As þe felle of a froske, and fraknede it semede,

He was hook-nosed like a hawk, with hair up to his eyes, and beetle brows.

Huke-nebbyde as a hawke, and a hore berde,
And herede to þe hole eyghne with hyngande browes;
Harske as a hunde-fisch, hardly who so lukez,

His skin was hard as that of a dog-fish; his ears huge and ugly; his eyes horrible and burning.

So was þe hyde of þat hulke hally al over!
Erne had he fulle huge, and ugly to schewe,
With eghne fulle horreble, and ardaunt for sothe;

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fflatt mowthede as a fluke, *with* fleryande lyppys,
And *þe* flesche in his fortethe fowly as a bere:
His berde was brothy and blake, *þat* tille his brest rechede,
Grassede as a mereswyne with corkes fulle huge,
And alle falterde *þe* flesche in his foule lyppys,
Ilke wrethe as a wolfe-hevede, it wraythe owtt at ones!
Bullenekkyde was *þat* bierne, and brade in the scholders,
Brok-brestede as a brawne, *with* brustils fulle large,
Ruyd armes as an ake *with* rusclede sydes,
Lyme and leskes fulle lothyne, leve *ȝe* for sothe:
Schovelle-fotede was *þat* schalke, and schaylande hyme semyde,
With schankez unschaply, schowande to-gedyrs;
Thykke theefe as a thursse, and thikkere in the hanche,
Greesse growene as a galte, fulle grylych he lukez!
Who *þe* lenghe of *þe* lede lelly accountes,
ffro *þe* face to *þe* fote, was fyfe fadome lange!
Thane stertez he up sturdely one two styffe schankez,
And sone he caughte hyme a clubb alle of clene yryne!
He walde hafe kyllede *þe* kyng with his kene wapene,
Bot thurghe *þe* crafte of Cryste *ȝit* *þe* carle failede;
The creest and *þe* coronalle, *þe* claspes of sylver,
Clenly with his clubb he crasschede doune at onez!
The kyng castes up his schelde, and covers hym faire,
And *with* his burlyche brande a box he hyme reches;
ffulle butt in *þe* frunt the fromonde he hittez,
That the burnyscht blade to *þe* brayne rynnez;
He feyed his fysnamye *with* his foule hondez,
And frappez faste at hys face fersely *þer*-aftyr!
The kyng chaungez his fote, eschewes a lyttille,
Ne had he eschapede *þat* choppe, chevede had evylle;
He folowes in fersly, and festenesse a dynte
Hye upe one the haunche, *with* his harde wapyne,
That he hillid the swerde halfe a fote large;
The hott blode of *þe* hulke un-to the hilte rynnez,
Ewyne into inmette the gyaunt he hyttez,

Flat-mouthed, with grinning lips, and jaws like a bear.
A black beard reached to his breast, with mighty bristles.
The flesh of his lips was in uneven folds, each fold, like an outlaw, twisted itself out.
He was bull-necked and broad in the shoulders; breasted like a boar, with huge bristles; his arms like an oak; his limbs and flanks loathly; shovel-footed and scaly, with unshapely shanks;
of gigantic thickness in his haunches.
Fat as a pig, he looks horrible.
In height, full five fathoms.
Up starts this fell giant, and seizing an iron club, aims a blow at Arthur.
The king catches it on his shield, and returns the blow with his sword right upon the forehead.
The bright blade pierces to the brain.
The giant tears his face with his hands, and strikes fiercely at the king.
Arthur draws back,
and then drives his sword into the giant's haunch.

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Just to *þe* genitales, and jaggede *þame* in sondre!

The monster roars and strikes at random.
So mighty is his stroke, that it penetrates a sword's length into the ground.
The king nearly swoons at the noise of the blow, but quickly striking him, bursts asunder his groin.
His entrails and blood gush out.
Then throwing away his club, the giant seizes Arthur in his arms.

Thane he romyede and rarede, and ruydly he strykez
ffulle egerly at Arthur, and one the erthe hittez
A swerde lenghe *with*-in the swarthe, he swappez at ones,
That nere swounes *þe* kyng for swoughe of his dynttez!
Bot ȝit the kynge sweperly fulle swythe he byswenkez,
Swappez in *with* the swerde *þat* it *þe* swange brystedd;
Bothe *þe* guttez and the gorre guschez owte at ones,
Þat alle englaymez *þe* gresse, one grounde *þer* he standez!
Thane he castez the clubb, and the kynge hentez,
On *þe* creeste of *þe* cragg he caughte hyme in armez,
And enclosez hyme clenly, to crusehene hys rybbez;
So harde haldez he *þat* hende, that nere his herte brystez!
Þane *þe* balefulle bierdez bownez to *þe* erthe,
Knelande and cryande, and clappide *þeire* handez,—

The baleful birds pray for the success of Arthur.

"Crist comforthe ȝone knyghte, and kepe hym fro sorowe,
And latte nev*er* ȝone fende felle hyme olyfe!"
ȝitt es *þe* warlow so wyghte, he welters hyme undere,

They have a fearful wrestling match, and fall from the top of the cliff down to the shore.

Wrothely *þai* wrythyne and wrystille to-gederz,
With welters and walowes over *with*-in *þase* buskez,
Tumbellez and t*ur*nes faste, and terez *þaire* wedez,
Untenderly fro *þe* toppe thai tiltine to-gederz;
Whilome Arthure ov*er*, and o*þer* while undyre,
ffro *þe* heghe of the hylle un-to the harde roche;
They feyne nev*er* are they falle at *þe* flode merkes;

Arthur stabs the giant,

Bot Arthur *with* ane anlace egerly smyttez,
And hittez ev*er* in the hulke up to *þe* hiltez;

who in his death-struggle breaks three of Arthur's ribs.

Þe theefe at *þe* dede thrawe so throly hyme thryngez,
Þat three rybbys in his syde he thrystez in sundere!
Thenne *syr* Kayo*us* the kene unto the kynge styrtez,—
Said, "allas! we are lorne, my lorde es co*n*fundede,
Ov*er* fallene with a fende! us es fulle hapnede!

His knights find him lying exhausted.

We mone be forfetede in faith, and flemyde for ev*er*!"
Þay hafe up hys hawberke *þane*, and handilez *þer*-undyre,
His hyde and his haunche eke, one heghte to *þe* schuldrez;
His flawnke and his feletez, and his faire sydez,

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Bothe his bakke and his breste, and his bryghte armez:
1160 Þay ware fayne that they fande no flesche entamede,
And for þat journee made joye, þir gentille knyghttez;
"Now, certez," saise Sir Bedwere, "it semez, be my Lorde!
He sekez seyntez bot seldene, þe sorere he grypes,
1164 That thus clekys this corsaunt owte of þir heghe clyffez,
To carye forthe siche a carle at close hym in silvere;
Be Myghelle of syche a makke, I hafe myche wondyre
That ever owre soveraygne Lorde suffers hyme in hevene;
1168 And alle seyntez be syche, þat servez oure Lorde,
I salle never no seynt bee, be my fadyre sawle!"
Thane bourdez þe bolde kyng at Bedvere wordez,—
"Þis seynt have I soghte, so helpe me owre Lorde!
1172 ffor-thy brayd owtte þi brande, and broche hyme to þe herte;
Be sekere of this sergeaunt, he has me sore grevede!
I faghte noghte wyth syche a freke þis fyftene wyntyrs,
Bot in the montez of Araby I mett syche anoþer;
1176 He was þe forcyere be ferre þat had I nere fundene,
Ne had my fortune bene faire, fey had I levede!
Anone stryke of his hevede, and stake it there aftyre,
Gife it to thy sqwyere, fore he es wele horsede;
1180 Bere it to *syr* Howelle, þat es in harde bandez,
And byd hyme herte hym wele, his enmy es destruede!
Syne bere it to Bareflete, and brace it in yryne,
And sett it on the barbycane, biernes to schewe;
1184 My brande and my brode schelde apone þe bent lyggez,
On þe creeste of þe cragge, thare fyrste we encontrede,
And þe clubb þarby, alle of clene irene,
Þat many Cristene has kyllyde in Constantyne landez;
1188 fferke to the far-lande, and fetche me þat wapene,
And late founde tille oure flete, in flode þare it lengez:
If thow wylle any tresour, take whate the lykez;
Have I the kyrtylle and þe clubb, I coveite noghte elles!"
1192 Now þey caire to þe cragge, þise comlyche knyghtez,

They examine him and find no wound.

Sir Bedever speaks facetiously of this saint whom Arthur had sought.

If all saints are like him no saint would he be.

Arthur bids him stab the monster to the heart, to make sure of him, for only once before had he met with such a terrible foe.

He bids them cut off his head,

and bear it first to Sir Hoel,

then to Barflete, and set it on the barbican.

His sword and shield and the giant's club are to be fetched from the hill.

They may take what treasure they will; all Arthur desires is the kirtle and the club.

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And broghte hyme þe brade schelde, and his bryghte wapene,

The affair was kept a secret till break of day.

The clubb and the cotte alles, Sir Kayous hym selvene,
And kayres with conquerour, the kyngez to schewe;
That in coverte the kynge helde closse to hym selvene,
Whilles clene day fro þe clowde, clymbyd on lofte.
Be that to courte was comene clamour fulle huge,

Then the people kneel before Arthur, and thank and praise him for slaying the giant.

And be-fore the comlyche kynge they knelyd alle at ones,—
"Welcome, oure liege lorde, to lang has thow duellyde!
Governour undyr Gode, graytheste and noble,
To whame grace es graunted, and gyffene at his wille!
Now thy comly come has comforthede us alle!
Thow has in thy realtee revengyde thy pople!
Thurghe helpe of thy hande, thyne enmyse are struyede,
That has thy renkes over-ronne, and refte theme theire childyre!
What never rewme owte of araye so redyly relevede!"
Thane þe conquerour Cristenly carpez to his pople,

Arthur ascribes all to God.

"Thankes Gode," *quod* he, "of þis grace, and no gome elles,
ffor it was never manes dede, bot myghte of Hymselfene,
Or myracle of hys modyre, þat mylde es tille alle!"

He bids his followers distribute the giant's treasure among the clergy and people.

He somond þan þe schippemene scharpely þer-aftyre,
To schake furth with þe schyre mene to schifte þe gudez;
"Alle þe myche tresour that traytour had wonnene,
To commons of the contré, clergye ond oþer,
Luke it be done and delte to my dere pople,
That none pleyne of theire parte, o peyne of þour lyfez."
He comande hys cosyne, with knyghtlyche wordez,

A church and convent are to be built on the cliff.

To make a kyrke on þe cragg, ther the corse lengez,
And a covent there-in, Criste for to serfe,
In mynde of þat martyre, þat in þe monte rystez.

When the giant was slain, Arthur moves from Barflete to Castle Blanc.

Qwen Sir Arthur the kynge had kylled þe gyaunt,
Than blythely fro Bareflete he buskes one þe morne,
With his batelle one brede, by þa blythe stremes;

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To-warde Castelle Blanke he chesez hym the waye,
Thurghe a faire champayne, undyr schalke hyllis;
The kyng fraystez a-furth over the fresche strandez,
1228 ffoundez with his faire folke over as hym lykez:
ffurthe stepes that steryne, and strekez his tentis
One a strenghe by a streme, in þas straytt landez.
Onone aftyre middaye, in the mene-while,
1232 þare comez two messangeres of tha fere marchez, — Then come two messengers from the Marshal of France, who acquaint Arthur
ffra þe marschalle of Fraunce, and menskfully hym gretes,
Besoghte hyme of sucour, and saide hyme thise wordez,—
"Sir, thi marschalle thi mynistre, thy mercy be-sekez,
1236 Of thy mekille magestee, fore mendement of thy pople,
Of þise marchez-mene, that thus are myskaryede, — with the mischief which the Emperor Lucius is working in France,
And thus merred amange, maugree theire eghne;
I witter þe þe emperour es entirde into Fraunce,
1240 With ostes of enmye, orrible and huge;
Brynnez in Burgoyne thy burghes so ryche,
And brittenes thi baronage, that bieldez thare-in;
He encrochez kenely by craftez of armez, — seizing castles,
1244 Countrese and castelles þat to thy coroun langez;
Confoundez thy commons, clergy and oþer; — confounding the commons,
Bot thow comfurth theme, syr kynge, cover salle they never!
He fellez forestez fele, forrayse thi landez, — felling forests,
1248 ffrysthez no fraunchez, bot fraisez the pople;
þus he fellez thi folke, and fangez theire gudez! — taking goods,
ffremedly the Franche tung fey es be-lefede.
He drawes in-to douce Fraunce, as Duchemen tellez,
1252 Dresside with his dragouns, dredfulle to schewe;
Alle to dede they dyghte with dynttys of swerddez, — killing dukes and douze-peers.
Dukez and dusperes, þat dreches thare-ine;
ffor-thy the lordez of the lande, ladys and oþer,
1256 Prayes the for Petyr luffe, þe apostylle of Rome,
Sen thow arte presant in place, þat þow wille profyre make — Therefore they desire Arthur's help.
To þat perilous prynce, be processe of tyme;
He ayers by ȝone hilles, ȝone heghe holtez undyr,

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Hufes thare *with* hale strenghe of haythene kyngez;
Helpe nowe for His lufe, that heghe in hevene sittez,
And talke tristly to theme, that thus us destroyes!"
The kyng biddis *syr* Boice, "buske the be-lyfe!
Take *with* the syr Berille, and Bedwere the ryche,
Sir Gawayne and *syr* Gryme, these galyarde knyghtez,
And graythe ȝowe to ȝone grene wode, and gose over
þer nedes;
Saise to syr Lucius, to unlordly he wyrkez,
Thus letherly agaynes law to lede my pople;
I lette hyme or oghte lange, ȝif me þe lyffe happene,
Or my lyghte salle lawe, þat hyme overe lande folowes;
Comande hym kenely wyth crewelle wordez,
Cayre owte of my kyngryke with his kydd knyghtez;
In caase that he wille noghte, þat cursede wreche,
Come for his curtaisie, and countere me ones!
Thane salle we rekkene fulle rathe, whatt ryghte þat he
claymes,
Thus to ryot þis rewme and raunsone the pople!
Thare salle it derely be delte *with* dynttez of handez
The Dryghttene at Domesdaye dele as hyme lykes!"
Now thei graythe theme to goo, theis galyarde knyghttez,
Alle gleterande in golde, appone grete stedes,
To-warde þe grene wode, þat *with* growndene wapyne,
To grete wele the grett lorde, that wolde be grefede sone;
Thise hende hovez on a hille by þe holte eynes,
Be-helde þe howsyng fulle hye of Hathene kynges;
They herde in theire herbergage hundrethez fulle many,
Hornez of olyfantez fulle helych blawene;
Palaisez proudliche pyghte, þat palyd ware ryche,
Of palle and of purpure, wyth precyous stones;
Pensels and pomelle of ryche prynce armez,
Pighte in þe playne mede, þe pople to schewe:
And thane the Romayns so ryche had arayede their tentez
On rawe by þe ryvere, undyre þe round hillez,
The emperour for honour ewyne in the myddes,

He sends some of his knights to the Emperor,

to bid him depart out of his kingdom, or meet him in single combat.

The knights go on their errand glittering in gold upon great steeds.

They see the luxurious camp of the heathen kings,

and the rich tents of the Romans.

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Wyth egles al over ennelled so faire:
And saw hyme and þe Sowdane, and senatours many,
1296 Seke to-warde a sale with sextene kyngez,
Syland softely in, swettly by theme selfene,
To sowpe withe þat soveraygne, fulle selcouthe metez.
Nowe they wende over the watyre, þise wyrchipfulle knyghttez,
1300 Thurghe þe wode to þe wone, there the wyese rystez;
Reght as þey hade weschene, and went to þe table,
Sir Wawayne þe worthethy un-wynly he spekes,—
"The myghte *and* þe majestee, that menskes us alle,
1304 That was merked and made thurghe þe myghte of hymselvene,
Gyffe ȝow sytte in ȝour sette, Sowdane and oþer,
That here are semblede in sale, unfawghte mott ȝe worthe!
And þe fals heretyke, þat emperour hym callez,
1308 That ocupyes in erroure the empyre of Rome,
Sir Arthure herytage, þat honourable kynge,
That alle his auncestres aughte bot Utere hyme one,
That ilke cursynge þat Cayme kaghte for his brothyre,
1312 Cleffe over the cukewalde, with croune ther thow lengez,
ffor the unlordlyeste lede þat I on lukede ever!
My lorde mervailles hym mekylle, mane, be my trouthe,
Why thow morthires his mene, þat no mysse serves,
1316 Commons of þe contré, clergye and oþer,
Þat are noghte coupable þer-in, ne knawes noght in armez;
ffor-thi the comelyche kynge, curtays and noble,
Comandez þe kenely to kaire of his landes,
1320 Ore elles for thy knyghthede encontre hyme ones;
Sen þow covettes the coroune, latte it be declarede!
I hafe dyschargide me here, chalange whoo lykez,
Be-fore alle thy chevalrye, cheftaynes and oþer:
1324 Schape us an ansuere, and schunte þow no lengere,
Þat we may schifte at þe schorte, and schewe to my lorde."
The emperour ansuerde wyth austeryne wordez,
"ȝe are with myne enmy, Sir Arthure hyme selvene!

The Roman Emperor and the Sultan are going to banquet together.

The knights present themselves.

Sir Gawaine delivers the message,

and upbraids with haughty words the Roman Emperor;

bids him depart, or try a single combat with Arthur.

He challenges all the knights of Rome.

The Emperor replies,

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It es none honour to me to owttray hys knyghttez,
Þoghe ȝe be irous mene, þat ayres one his nedez;
Bot say to thy soveraygne, I send hyme thes wordez,
Ne ware it for reverence of my ryche table,
threatening the knights for their audacity. Þou sulde repent fulle rathe of þi ruyde wordez!
Siche a rebawde as þowe rebuke any lordez,
Wyth theire retenuz arrayede, fulle realle *and* noble!
He will stay in Arthur's land as long as he pleases, Here wille I suggourne, whilles me lefe thynkes,
And sythene seke in by Sayne *with* solace þer-aftere;
Ensegge all þa cetese be the salte strandez,
And seyne ryde in by Rone, þat rynnes so faire,
and destroy his cities and castles. And of alle his ryche castelles rusche doune þe wallez;
I salle noghte lefe in Paresche, by processe of tyme,
His parte of a pechelyne, prove whene hyme lykes!"
Whereupon Sir Gawaine desires himself to fight with him, "Now, certez," sais *syr* Wawayne, "myche wondyre have I,
Þat syche an alfyne as thow dare speke syche wordez!
I had lever thene alle Fraunce, that hevede es of rewmes,
ffyghte *with* the faythefully one felde be oure one."
but Sir Gayous, uncle to the Roman Emperor, answers and charges the British knights with being braggarts. Thane answers syr Gayous fulle gobbede wordes,—
Was eme to þe emperour, and erle hyme selfene,—
"Evere ware þes Bretons braggers of olde!
Loo! how he brawles hyme for hys bryghte wedes,
As he myghte bryttyne us alle *with* his brande ryche!
ȝitt he berkes myche boste, ȝone boy þere he standes!"
Thane grevyde *syr* Gawayne at his grett wordes,
On this Sir Gawaine rushes at him and strikes off his head. Graythes to-warde þe gome *with* grucchande herte;
With hys stelyne brande he strykes of hys hevede,
And sterttes owtte to hys stede, and *with* his stale wendes!
Then the British knights fly with all speed. Thurghe þe wacches þey wente, thes wirchipfulle knyghtez,
And fyndez in theire fare waye wondyrlyche many;
Over the watyre þey wente by wyghtnesse of horses,
And tuke wynde as þey walde by þe wodde hemes:
Thane folous frekly one fote frekkes ynewe,

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And of þe Romayns arrayed appone ryche stedes,
Chasede thurghe a champayne oure chevalrous knyghtez, The Romans give chase.
Tille a cheefe forest, one schalke white horses:
Bot a freke alle in fyne golde, and fretted in salle,
Come forþermaste on a fresone, in flawmande wedes;
A faire floreschte spere in fewtyre he castes,
And folowes faste one owre folke, and freschelye ascryez.
Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude appone a graye stede, The foremost of the pursuers is slain by Sir Gawaine.
He gryppes hym a grete spere, and graythely hyme hittez;
Thurghe þe guttez in-to the gorre he gyrdes hyme ewyne,
That the groundene stele glydez to his herte!
The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde lyggez,
ffulle gryselyche gronande, for grefe of his woundez.
Þane presez a preker ine, fulle proudely arayede,
That beres alle of pourpour, palyde with sylver:
Byggly on a broune stede he profers fulle large;
He was a Paynyme of Perse þat þus hyme persuede. Another knight, a paynim of Persia, by Sir Boys.
Sir Boys un-abaiste alle he buskes hyme a-gaynes,
With a bustous launce he berez hyme thurghe,
þat þe breme and the brade schelde appone þe bente lyggez!
And he bryngez furthe the blade, *and* bownez to his felowez.
Thane *syr* Foltemour of myghte, a man mekylle praysede, Sir Foltemour seeks to avenge Sir Gayous,
Was movede one his manere, and manacede fulle faste;
He graythes to *syr* Gawayne graythely to wyrche,
ffor grefe of *syr* Gayous, þat es one grounde levede.
Thane *syr* Gawayne was glade; agayne hyme he rydez,
Wyth Galuth his gude swerde graythely hyme hyttez;
The knyghte one þe coursere he clevede in sondyre, but Sir Gawaine cleaves him asunder.
Clenlyche fro þe croune his corse he dyvysyde,
And þus he killez þe knyghte with his kydd wapene!
Than a ryche mane of Rome relyede to his byerns,— Then a rich man of Rome suggests a retreat.
"It salle repent us fulle sore and we ryde forthire!
Þone are bolde bosturs, þat syche bale wyrkez;
It befelle hym fulle foule, þat þame so fyrste namede."

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The rich Romans return,

Thane þe riche Romayns retournes þaire brydilles
To þaire tentis in tene, telles theire lordez
How *syr* Marschalle de Mowne es on þe monte lefede,
ffore-justyde at that journee, for his grett japez.
Bot thare chasez one oure mene chevallrous knyghtez,

but five thousand horsemen still pursue the knights,

ffyve thosande folke appone faire stedes,
ffaste to a foreste one a felle watyr,
That fillez fro þe falow see fyfty myle large.

and fall upon an ambush of Bretons,

Thare ware Bretons enbuschide, and banarettez noble,
Of þe chevalrye cheefe of þe kyngez chambyre,
Seese theme chase oure mene, and changene þeire horsez,
And choppe doune cheftaynes, that they moste chargyde;

who break out suddenly on them,

Thane þe embuschement of Bretons brake owte at ones,
Brothely at banere, and Bedwyne knyghtez,
Arrestede of þe Romayns, þat by þe fyrthe rydez,
Alle þe realeste renkes þat to Rome lengez;
Thay iche on þe enmyse and egerly strykkys,

with shouts of "Arthur."

Erles of Inglande, and Arthure ascryes,
Thrughe brenes and bryghte scheldez, brestez they thyrle,
Bretons of the boldeste with theire bryghte swerdez;
Thare was Romayns over redyne, and ruydly wondyde,

The Romans are defeated and driven back,

Arrestede as rebawdez, with ryotous knyghttez!
The Romaynes owte of araye removede at ones,
And rydes awaye in a rowtte, for reddoure it semys!
To þe senatour Petyr a sandes-mane es commyne,
And saide, "*Syr*, sekyrly, ȝour seggez are supprysside!"

but the Senator Peter sends ten thousand men.

Than tene thowsande mene he semblede at ones,
And sett sodanly one oure seggez, by þe salte strandez;
Than ware Bretons abaiste, and grevede a lyttille,
Bot ȝit the banerettez bolde, and bachellers noble,
Brekes that battailles *with* brestez of stedes;

The Bretons are repulsed, and

Sir Boice and his bolde mene myche bale wyrkes!
The Romaynes redyes þane, arrayez þame better,
And al to-ruscheez oure mene withe theire ryste horsez,
Arestede of the richeste of þe rounde table,
Over-rydez oure rerewarde, and grette rewthe wyrkes!

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Thane þe Bretons on þe bente habyddez no lengere,
Bot fleede to þe foreste, and the feelde levede; — fly to the forest.
Sir Berylle es borne downe and syr Boice takene, — Sir Beryll is borne down and Sir Bois taken,
The beste of oure bolde mene unblythely wondyde;
Bot ȝitt oure stale one a strenghe stotais a lyttille, — but again they make a little stand,
Alle to-stonayede with þe strokes of þa steryne knyghtez; — grieving for the loss of their leader, and pray for succour.
Made sorowe fore theire soveraygne, that so þare was nomene,
Be-soughte Gode of socure, sende whene hym lykyde!
Than commez syr Idrus, armede up at alle ryghttez, — Sir Idrus, with five hundred men, come to their aid.
Wyth fyve hundrethe mene appone faire stedes,
ffraynez faste at oure folke freschely þare aftyre,
ȝif þer frendez ware ferre, þat one the felde foundide.
Thane sais syr Gawayne, "so me God helpe! — Sir Gawaine laments the check which Arthur's men had received.
We hafe bene chased to daye, and chullede as hares,
Rebuyked with Romaynes appone þeire ryche stedez,
And we lurkede undyr lee as lowrande wreches!
I luke never one my lorde þe dayes of my lyfe,
And we so lytherly hyme helpe, þat hyme so wele lykede!"
Thane the Bretons brothely brochez theire stedez, — The British return to the fray.
And boldly in batelle appone þe bent rydes;
Alle þe ferse mene be-fore frekly ascryes,
fferkand in þe foreste, to freschene þame selfene;
The Romaynes thane redyly arrayes theme bettyre, — The Romans prepare themselves against them.
One rawe on a rowm-felde, reghttez theire wapyns,
By þe ryche revare, and rewles þe pople;
And with reddour syr Boice es in areste haldene.
Now thei semblede unsaughte by þe salte strandez;
Gladdly theis sekere mene settys þeire dynttez,
With lufly launcez one lofte they luyschene to-gedyres,
In Lorayne so lordlye on leppande stedes;
Thare ware gomes thurghe girde with grundyne wapynes, — A fierce battle ensues.
Grisely gayspande with grucchande lotes!
Grete lordes of Greke greffede so hye;
Swyftly with swerdes, they swappene there-aftyre,
Swappez doune fulle sweperlye swelltande knynghtez,

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That alle swelltez one swarthe, that they over swyngene,
Se many sweys in swoghe swounande att ones!

Sir Gawaine does mighty deeds of valour.

1468 Syr Gawayne the gracyous fulle graythelye he wyrkkes,
The gretteste he gretez wyth gryeslye wondes;
Wyth Galuth he gyrdez doune fulle galyarde knyghtez,
ffore greefe of þe grett lorde so grymlye he strykez!

1472 He rydez furthe ryallye and redely there-aftyre,
Thare this realle renke was in areste haldene;
He ryfez ye raunke stele, he ryghttez þeire brenez,
And reste theme the ryche mane, and rade to his strenghes,

The Senator Peter comes against him,

1476 The senatour Petur thane persewede hyme aftyre,
Thurghe þe presse of þe peple, wyth his pryce knyghttes;
Appertly fore þe prysonere proves his strenghes,
Wyth prekers the proudeste that to þe presse lengez;

1480 Wrothely one the wrange hande syr Gawayne he strykkes,
Wyth a wapene of were unwynely hyme hittez;

but in spite of him Sir Gawaine rescues Sir Boice.

The breny one þe bakhalfe he brystez in sondyre!
Bot ȝit he broghte forthe syr Boyce, for alle þeire bale
he biernez!

Rejoiced at this the British press on more boldly.

1484 Thane þe Bretones boldely braggene þeire tromppez,
And fore blysse of syr Boyce was broghte owtte of bandez,
Boldely in batelle they bere doune knyghtes;
With brandes of broune stele they brettened maylez;

1488 Þay stekede stedys in stoure with stelene wapynes,
And alle stowede wyth strenghe, þat stode theme agaynes!

Sir Idrus, with sixteen knights, attacks the Senator,

Sir Idrus fitz Ewayne þane Arthur ascryeez,
Assemblez one þe senatour wyth sextene knyghttez,

1492 Of þe sekereste mene þat to oure syde lengede;
Sodanly in a soppe they sette in att ones,
ffoynes faste att þe fore breste with flawmande swerdez,
And feghttes faste att þe fronte freschely þare aftyre;

1496 ffelles fele on þe felde appone þe ferrere syde,
ffey on þe faire felde by þa fresche strandez;
Bot syr Idrus fytz Ewayne anters hyme selvene,
And entters in anly, and egyrly strykez,

1500 Sekez to þe senatour and sesez his brydille,

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Unsaughtely he saide hyme these fittande wordez,—
"ȝelde þe, *syr*, ȝapely, ȝife þou þi lyfe ȝernez, — and takes him prisoner.
ffore gyftez þat þow gyffe may, þou ȝeme now þe selfene;
ffore dredlez dreche þow, or droppe any wylez,
Thow salle dy þis daye thorow dyntt of my handez!"
"I ascente," *quod* þe senatour, "so me Criste helpe!
So þat I be safe broghte before the kynge selvene; The Senator desires to be brought to the king.
Raunsone me resonabillye, as I may over reche,
Aftyre my renttez in Rome may redyly forthire."
Thane answers *syr* Idrus with austeryne wordez, Sir Idrus answers him roughly.
"Thow salle hafe condycyone, as the kynge lykes,
Whene thow comes to þe kyth there the courte haldez
In caase his concelle bee to kepe the no langere,
To be killyde at his commandment his knyghttez be-fore."
þay ledde hym furthe in þe rowte, and lached ofe his wedes
Lefte hym wyth Lyonelle, and Lowelle hys brothire, He gives the Senator into the charge of Sir Lionel and Sir Lowell.
O-lawe in þe launde þane, by þe lythe strandez.
Sir Lucius legge-mene loste are fore ever!
The senatour Petur es prysoner takyne!
Of Perce and of Porte Jaffe fulle many price knyghtez,
And myche pople wyth alle, perischede þame selfene!
ffor presse of þe passage, they plungede at onez!
Thare myghte mene see Romaynez rewfully wondyde, Many of the Romans are slain.
Over-redyne with renkes of the round table!
In þe raike of þe furthe they rightene theire brenys,
þat rane alle one reede blode redylye alle over;
They raughte in þe rerewarde fulle ryotous knyghtez,
ffor raumsone of rede golde and realle stedys;
Radly relayes, and restez theire horsez,
In rowtte to þe ryche kynge they rade al at onez. The knights ride back towards the king, and send him the news of their success.
A knyghte cayrez be-fore, and to þe kynge telles,—
"Sir, here commez thy messangerez with myrthez fro þe mountez,
þay hafe bene machede to daye with mene of þe marchez,
ffore-maglede[1] in þe marras with mervailous knyghtez!

[1] Halliwell reads "fore manglede."

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We hafe foughtene in faithe, by ȝone fresche strandez,
They tell him that they have slain fifty thousand men,
With þe frekkeste folke that to þi foo langez;
ffyfty thosaunde one felde of ferse mene of armez,
Wyth-in a furlange of waye, fay ere by-lefede!
We hafe eschewede þis chekke, thurghe chance of oure Lorde,
Of tha chevalrous mene that chargede thy pople!
and taken prisoners the chief Chancellor and the Senator Peter, as well as many paynims.
The cheefe chaunchelere of Rome, a cheftayne fulle noble,
Wille aske þe chartyre of pesse for charitee hym selfene;
And the senatour Petire to presone es takyne.
Of Perse and of Porte Jaffe Paynymmez ynewe
Comez prekande in the presse, with thy prysse knyghttez,
With poverte in thi presone theire paynez to drye;
I be-seke ȝow, sir, say whate ȝowe lykes,
Whethire ȝe suffyre theme saughte, or sone delyverde:
Arthur may demand sixty horse-loads of silver for the Senator,
ȝe may have fore þe senatour sextie horse chargede
Of silver be Seterdaye, fulle sekyrly payede,
And for þe cheefe chauncelere, þe chevalere noble,
and for the Chancellor, chariots full of gold.
Charottez chokkefulle charegyde with golde;
The other prisoners may be kept until their rents are known.
The remenaunt of þe Romaynez be in areste haldene,
Tille thiere renttez in Rome be rightewissly knawene.
I be-seke ȝow, sir, certyfye ȝone lordez,
All Arthur's men had escaped, save Sir Ewaine, who was wounded.
ȝif ȝe wille send þame over þe see, or kepe þame ȝour selfene:
Alle ȝour sekyre mene forsothe sounde are by-levyde,
Save syr Ewayne fytz Henry es in þe side wonddede."
The king rejoices.
"Crist be thankyde," *quod* the kynge, "and hys clere modyre,
That ȝowe comforthede and helpede be crafte of hyme selfene;
The fate of battle, he says, is in the hands of God.
Skilfulle skomfyture he skiftez as hym lykez,
Is none so skathlye may skape, ne skewe fro his handes;
Desteny and doughtynes of dedys of armes,
Alle es demyd and delte at Dryghtynez wille!
He thanks the knight for his tidings, and gives him for reward the city of Tholouse.
I kwne the thanke for thy come, it comfortes us alle!
Sir knyghte," sais þe conquerour, "so me Criste helpe!
I ȝif the for thy thyȝandez Tolouse þe riche,

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The tolle and þe tachementez, tavernez and oþer,
The towne and the tenementez with towrez so hye,
That towchez to the temperaltee, whilles my tyme lastez:
Bot say to the senatour I sende hyme þes wordez,
Thare salle no silver hym save, bot Ewayne recovere;
I had lever see hym synke one the salte strandez,
Than the seegge ware seke, þat es so sore woundede;
I salle dissevere that sorte, so me Criste helpe!
And sett theme fulle solytarie, in sere kyngez landez:
Salle he never sownde see his seynowres in Rome,
Ne sitt in þe assemblé, in syghte wyth his feris;
ffor it comes to no kynge þat conquerour es holdene,
To comone with his captifis fore covatys of silver:
It come never of knyghthede, knawe it ȝif hyme lyke,
To carpe of coseri, whene captyfis ere takyne;
It aughte to no presoners to prese no lordez,
Ne come in presens of pryncez, whene partyes are movede:
Comaunde ȝone constalle, þe castelle þat ȝemes,
That he be clenlyche kepede, and in close haldene;
He salle have maundement to morne or myddaye be roungene,
To what marche þay salle merke, with mangere to lengene."
Þay convaye this captyfe with clene mene of armez,
And kend hym to þe constable, alles þe kynge byddez;
And seyne to Arthure þey ayre, and egerly hym towchez
The answere of þe emperour, irows of dedez.
Thane syr Arthure one erthe, atheliste of oþere,
At evene at his awene borde avantid his lordez,—
"Me aughte to honour theme in erthe over alle oþer thyngez,
Þat þus in myne absens awnters þeme selfene;
I salle theme luffe whylez I lyffe, so me our Lorde helpe!
And gyfe þeme landys fulle large, whare theme beste lykes;
Thay salle noghte lesse, one þis layke, ȝif me lyfe happene,
Þat þus are lamede for my lufe be þis lythe strandez."

The Senator shall not be ransomed save Sir Ewaine recovers.

The others shall be divided into different countries.

Arthur holds that to accept ransom becomes not a king.

They are to take the Senator to the Constable and bid him keep him safe.

The knights obey, and then return to Arthur to give him the Emperor's message.

Arthur greatly commends his knights for their boldness, and promises them rewards.

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In the morning Sir Cador and his knights are bid to take the prisoners

Bot in þe clere daweyng, þe dere kynge hyme selfene
Comaundyd *syr* Cadore with his dere knyghttes,
Sir Cleremus, sir Cleremonde, with clene mene of armez,
Sir Clowdmur, *syr* Clegis, to convaye theis lordez;
Sir Boyce and *syr* Berelle with baners displayede,
Sir Bawdwyne, *syr* Bryane, and *syr* Bedwere the ryche,
Sir Raynalde and *syr* Richere, Rawlaundes childyre,
To ryde with þe Romaynes in rowte wyth theire feres.

to Paris, and to give them into the care of the Provost.

"Prekez now prevalye to Paris the ryche,
Wyth Petir the pryssonere and his price knyghttez;
Be-teche þam þe proveste, in presens of lordez,
O payne and o perelle þat pendes there too,
That they be weisely wachede and in warde holdene,
Wardede of warantizez with wyrchipfulle knyghttez;
Wagge hyme wyghte mene, and woonde for no silvyre;
I haffe warnede þat wy, be ware ȝife hyme lykes!"

The British knights depart towards Chartres.

Now bownes þe Bretones, als þe kynge byddez,
Buskez theire batelles, theire baners displayez;
To-wardez Chartris they chese, these chevalrous knyghttez,

But the Emperor had dispatched a chosen band to intercept them.

And in the champayne lande fulle faire þay eschewede:
ffor þe emperour of myghte had ordande hym selfene
Sir Utolfe and sir Ewandyre, two honourable kyngez,
Erles of þe Orient, with austerynе knyghttez,
Of þe awntrouseste mene þat to his oste lengede,
Sir Sextynour of Lyby and Senatours many,
The kynge of Surrye hym-selfe with Sarazynes ynewe,
The senatour of Sutere wyth sownes fulle huge,
Whas assygnede to þat courte be sent of his peres,
Traise to-warde Troys þe tresone to wyrke,
To hafe be-trappede with a trayne oure travelande knyghttez,
That hade persayfede þat Peter at Parys sulde lenge,
In presonne with þe provoste, his paynez to drye.
ffor-thi they buskede theme bownne with baners displayede,

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In the buskayle of his waye, on blonkkes fulle hugge;
Planttez theme in the pathe with powere arrayede,
To pyke up þe presoners fro oure pryse knyghttez.
Syr Cadore of Cornewalle comaundez his peris,
Sir Clegis, *syr* Cleremus, *syr* Cleremownde þe noble,
"Here es þe close of Clyme with clewes so hye;
Lokez the contree be clere, the corners are large;
Discoveres now sekerly skrogges and oþer,
That no skathelle in þe skroggez skorne us here aftyre;
Loke ȝe skyste it so þat us no skathe lympe,
ffor na skomfitoure in skoulkery is skomfite ever."
Now they hye to þe holte, thes harageous knyghttez,
To herkene of þe hye mene to helpene theis lordez;
ffyndez theme helmede hole and horsesyde on stedys,
Hovande one þe hye waye by þe holte hemmes.
With knyghttly contenaunce Sir Clegis hym selfene
Kryes to þe companye, and carpes thees wordez,—
"Es there any kyde knyghte, kaysere or oþer,
Wille kyth for his kynge lufe craftes of armes?
We are comene fro the kyng of þis lythe ryche,
That knawene es for conquerour, corownde in erthe,
His ryche retenuz here alle of his round table,
To ryde with þat realle in rowtte where hyme lykes;
We seke justynges of werre, ȝif any wille happyne,
Of þe jolyeste mene a-juggede be lordes;
If here be any hathelle mane, erle or oþer,
That for þe emperour lufe wille awntere hym-selfene."
And ane erle þane in angerd answeres hym sone,—
"Me angers at Arthure, and att his hathelle bierns,
That thus in his errour ocupyes theis rewmes;
And owtrayes þe emperour, his erthely lorde!
The araye and þe ryalltez of þe rounde table
Es wyth rankour rehersede in rewmes fulle many;
Of oure renttez of Rome syche revelle he haldys,
Ne salle ȝife resoune fulle rathe, ȝif us reghte happene,

They take up a position in the path of Arthur's men.

Sir Cador keeps a sharp look out,

and discovers the enemy, armed and mounted, waiting by the skirts of a wood.

Sir Clegis challenges any knight among them to the combat.

An earl of the Roman party upbraids Arthur and his knights.

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That many sall*e* repente that in his rowtte rydez,
ffor the reklesse roy so rewlez hym-selfene!"

Sir Clegis glorifies Arthur,

"A!" sais *syr* Clegis þane, "so me Criste helpe!
I knawe be thi carpynge a cowntere þe semes!
Bot be þou auditoure or erle, or emperour thi-selfene,
Appone Arthurez by-halve I answere the sone:
The renke so realle, þat rewllez us alle,
The ryotous mene and þe ryche of þe rounde table,
He has araysede his accownte, and redde alle his rollez,

and boasts that he will punish well the Romans.

ffor he wylle gyfe a rekenyng that rewe salle aftyre,
That alle þe ryche salle repente þat to Rome langez,
Or þe rerearage be requit of rentez þat he claymez!

He desires three courses of war with any knights whom they will send.

We crafe of ȝour curtaisie three coursez of werre,
And claymez of knyghthode, take kepe to ȝour selfene!
ȝe do bott trayne us to daye wyth trofelande wordez!
Of syche travaylande mene trecherye me thynkes!
Sende owte sadly certayne knyghtez,
Or say me sekerly sothe, for sake ȝif ȝowe lykes."
Thane sais þe kynge of Surry, "Alls save me oure Lorde!
ȝif þow hufe alle þe daye, þou bees noghte delyverede,

The King of Syria insinuates that Sir Clegis may not be of noble ancestry.

Bot thow sekerly ensure with certeyne knyghtez,
þat þi cote and thi breste be knawene with lordez,
Of armes of ancestrye entyrde with londez."
"Sir kyng," sais *syr* Clegys, "fulle knyghttly þow askez:

Sir Clegis replies scornfully that his ancestors were at the siege of Troy.

I trowe it be for cowardys thow carpes thes wordez:
Myne armez are of ancestrye enveryde with lordez,
And has in banere bene borne sene *syr* Brut tyme;
At the cité of Troye þat tymme was ensegede,
Ofte seene in asawte with certayne knyghttez,
ffro þe Borghte broghte us and alle oure bolde elders,
To Bretayne þe braddere, with-in chippe-burdez."
"Sir," sais *syr* Sextenour, "saye what þe lykez,

Sir Sextemour declares that the Romans are ready for the fray.

And we salle suffyre the, als us beste semes;
Luke thi troumppez be trussede, and trofulle no lengere,
ffor þoghe þou tarye alle þe daye, the tyddes no bettyr!

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ffor there salle never Romayne, þat in my rowt rydez,
Be with rebawdez rebuykyde, whills I in werlde regne!"
Thane *syr* Clegis to þe kynge a lyttille enclinede,
Kayres to *syr* Cadore, and knyghtly hym tellez,—
"We have foundene in ȝone firthe, floreschede with leves,
þe flour of þe faireste folke þat to þi foo langez,
ffifty thosandez of folke of ferse mene of armez,
þat faire are fewteride on frounte undyr ȝone fre-bowes;
They are enbuschede one blonkkes, with baners displayede,
In ȝone bechene wode appone the waye sydes;
Thay hafe the furthe forsette alle of þe faire watyre,
That fayfully of force feghte us byhowys;
ffor thus us schappes to daye, schortly to telle,
Whedyre we schone or schewe, schyst as þe lykes."
"Nay," *quod* Cadore, "so me Criste helpe!
It ware schame *þat* we scholde schone for so lytylle!
Sir Lancelott salle never laughe, *þat* with þe kyng lengez,
That I sulde lette my waye for lede appone erthe;
I salle be dede and undone ar I here dreche,
ffor drede of any dogge-sone in ȝone dyme schawes!"
Syr Cador thane knyghtly comforthes his pople,
And with corage kene he karpes þes wordes,—
"Thynk one þe valyaunt prynce þat vesettez us ever,
With landez and lordscheppez, whare us beste lykes;
That has us ducheres delte, and dubbyde us knyghttez,
Gifene us gersoms and golde, and gardwynes many;
Grewhoundes and grett horse, and alkyne gamnes,
That gaynez tille any gome, that undyre God benez;
Thynke one riche renoune of þe rounde table,
And late it never be refte us fore Romayne in erthe;
ffeyne ȝow noghte feyntly, ne frythes no wapyns,
Bot luke ȝe fyghte faythefully, frekes ȝour-selfene;
I walde be wellyde alle qwyke, and quarterde in sondre,
Bot I wyrke my dede, whils I in wrethe lenge."

Sir Clegis tells Sir Cador that a vast number of the enemy are drawn up in the wood,

and suggests a retreat.

Sir Cador scorns to retreat.

Never shall Sir Lancelot laugh at him.

He will die before he turn back for any dog's son of them all.

Sir Cador exhorts his men, and tells them of the good deeds of Arthur.

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He dubs some of them knights.

Than this doughtty duke dubbyd his knyghttez,
Joneke and Askanere, Aladuke and oþer,
That ayerez were of Esexe, and alle þase este marchez;
Howelle and Hardelfe, happy in armez,
Sir Herylle and sir Herygalle, þise harageouse knyghttez:
Than the soverayne assignede certayne lordez,

To certain of them he gives the prisoner in charge.

Sir Wawayne, syr Uryelle, Sir Bedwere þe riche,
Raynallde and Richeere, and Rowlandez childyre,—
"Takez kepe one this prynce with ȝoure price knyghtez,
And ȝife we in þe stour withstondene the better,

If he is defeated, they are to convey him to some castle, or to Arthur.

Standez here in this stede, and stirrez no forthire;
And ȝif þe chaunce falle þat we bee over-charggede,
Eschewes to some castelle, and chewyse ȝour-selfene;
Or ryde to þe riche kynge ȝif ȝow roo happyne,
And bidde hym come redily to rescewe hys biernez."

The British prepare for the fight.

And than the Bretons brothely enbrassez þeire scheldez,
Braydez one bacenetez, and buskes theire launcez.
Thus he fittez his folke, and to þe felde rydez,
ffif hundreth one a frounte fewtrede at onez!
With trompes þay trine, and trappede stedes,
With cornettes and clarions, and clergialle notes;

The fight begins.

Schokkes in with a schakke, and schontez no langere,
There schawes ware scheene undyr þe schire eynez.
And thane the Romaynez rowtte remowes a lyttille,
Raykes with a rerewarde þas realle knyghttez;
So raply þay ryde thare, that alle þe rowte ryngez,
Of ryves and raunke stele, and ryche golde maylez;
Thane schotte owtte of þe schawe schiltrounis many,
With scharpe wapynes of ware schotande at ones:

The King of Lebe leads on the enemy.

The kynge of Lebe be-fore the wawarde he ledez,
And alle his lele lige mene o laundone ascriez:

He attacks Sir Beryll and slays him.

Thane this cruelle kynge castis in fewtire,
Kaghte hym a coverde horse, and his course haldez,
Beris to syr Berille, and brathely hym hittes,
Throwghe golet and gorgere he hurtez hym ewyne!
The gome and þe grette horse at þe grounde liggez,

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And gretez *gray*thely to Gode, and gyffes hym *þe* saule!
Thus es Berelle the bolde broghte owtte of lyve,
And byddez aftyre Beryelle, *þat* hym beste lykez.
And thane *syr* Cador of Cornewayle es carefulle in herte, — Sir Cador is overwhelmed with grief for his loss.
Be-cause of his kynyse mane, *þat* þus es myscaryede;
Umbeclappes the cors, and kyssez hyme ofte,
Gerte kepe hym coverte *with* his clere knyghttez.
Thane laughes the Lebe kynge, and alle on lowde meles, — The King of Lebe ridicules him.
"Ȝone lorde es lyghttede! me lykes the bettyre!
He salle noghte dere us to daye, the devylle have [his] bones!"
"Ȝone kynge," said Cador, "karpes fulle large,
Be-cause he killyd *þis* kene; Criste hafe *þi* saule!
He salle hafe corne bote, so me Criste helpe! — Sir Cador vows vengeance.
Or I kaire of *þis* coste, we salle encontre ones!
So may *þe* wynde weile turnne, I quytte hym or ewyne,
Sothely hym selfene, or summe of his ferez!"
Thane *syr* Cador *þe* kene knyghttly he wyrkez,
Cryez, "A! Cornewale," and castez in fewtere,
Girdez streke thourghe *þe* stour on a stede ryche! — He enacts great deeds of valour.
Many steryne mane he steride by strenghe of hyme one!
Whene his spere was sprongene, he spede hym fulle ȝerne, — When his lance is broken he fights with his sword.
Swappede owtte *with* a swerde, that swykede hym never,
Wroghte wayes fulle wyde, and wounded knyghttez;
Wyrkez his in wayfare fulle werkand sydez,
And hewes of *þe* hardieste halsez in sondyre,
That alle blendez with blode thare his blanke rynnez!
So many biernez the bolde broughte owt of lyfe,
Tittez tirauntez doune, and temez theire sadilles,
And turnez owte of *þe* toile, whene hym tyme thynkkez!
Thane the Lebe kynge criez fulle lowde — Then the King of Lebe ironically praises his deeds.
One *syr* Cador the kene, *with* cruelle wordez,
Thowe hase wyrchipe wonne, and wondyde knyghttez!
Thowe wenes fore thi wightenez the werlde es thy nowene!
I salle wayte at thyne honnde, wy, be my trowthe!
I have warnede *þe* wele, beware ȝif the lykez!"

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With cornuse and clariones þeis newe made knyghttez
The new-made knights, with sound of trumpets and spears in rest, rush to the fray.
Lythes un-to *þe* crye, and castez in fewtire;
fferkes in one a ffrounte one fferaunte stedez,
ffellede at *þe* fyrste come fyfty att ones!
Schotte thorowe the schiltrouns, and schev*e*rede launcez,
Laid doun*e* in *þe* lumppe lordly biernez!
Aud thus nobilly oure newe men*e* notez þeire strenghez.
Bot new notte es onon*e* þat noyes me sore;
The King of Lebe comes against them.
The kyng*e* of Lebe has laughte a stede þat hym lykede,
And comes in lordely in lyonez of silvere,
Umbelappez *þe* lumpe, and lattes in sondre;
Many lede w*ith* his launce *þe* liffe has he refede!
He makes great havoc among the new men.
Thus he chaces *þe* childire of *þe* kyngez chambire,
And killez in *þe* champanyse chevalrous knyghttez!
With a chasyny*e* spere he choppes doun*e* many!
Thare was *syr* Alyduke slayne, and Achino*ur* wondyde,
Sir Origg*e* and *syr* Ermyngall*e* hewen*e* al to pecez!
And ther was Lewlyn*e* laughte, and Lewlyns brothire,
With lordez of Lebe, and lede to þeire strenghez:
Had not Sir Clegis and Sir Clement come, the new men had gone to nought.
Ne hade *syr* Clegis comen*e*, and Clemente *þe* noble,
Oure newe mene hade gone to noghte, and many ma o*þer*.
Then Sir Cador puts his lance in rest, and strikes the King of Lebe fair on the helmet.
Thanne sir Cador the kene castez in fewtire
A cruell*e* launce and a kene, and to *þe* kynge rydez,
Hittez hym heghe on*e* the helme w*ith* his harde wapen*e*,
The heathen king falls to the ground mortally wounded.
That all*e* the hotte blode of hym to his hande rynnez!
The hethen*e* harageous kynge appon*e* *þe* hethe lyggez,
And of his hertly hurte helyde he nev*er*!
Sir Cador triumphs over him.
Thane *syr* Cador *þe* kene cryez full*e* lowde,—
"Thow has corne botte, *syr* kyng*e*, þare God gyfe *þe* sorowe,
Thow killyde my cosyn*e*, my kare es the lesse!
Kele the nowe in the claye, and comforthe thi selfen*e*!
Thow skornede us langere w*ith* thi skornefull*e* wordez,
And nowe has þow chevede soo; it es thyn*e* awen*e* skathe!
Holde at þow hente has, it harmez bot lyttill*e*,
ffor hethynge es hame holde, use it who so will*e*."

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The kyng of Surry þane es sorowfulle in herte,
ffor sake of this soveraygne, þat þus was supprisede;
Semblede his Sarazenes, and senatours manye:
Unsaughtyly þey sette thane appone oure sere knyghttez;
Sir Cador of Cornewaile he cownterez theme sone,
With his kydde companye clenlyche arrayede;
In the frount of þe fyrthe, as þe waye forthis,
ffyfty thosande of folke was fellide at ones!
Thare was at þe assemblé certayne knyghttez,
Sore wondede sone appone sere halfes;
The sekereste Sarzanez that to þat sorte lengede,
Be-hynde the sadylles ware sette sex fotte large;
They scherde in the schiltrone scheldyde knyghttez,
Schalkes they schotte thrughe schrenkande maylez,
Thurghe brenys browdene brestez they thirllede,
Brasers burnyste bristez in sondyre;
Blasons blode and blankes they hewene,
With brandez of browne stele brankkand stedez!
The Bretones brothely brittenez so many,
The bente and þe brode felde alle one blode rynnys!
Be thane *syr* Cayous þe kene a capitayne has wonnene,
Sir Clegis clynges in, and clekes anoþer;
The capitayne of Cordewa, undire þe kynge selfene,
That was keye of þe kythe of alle þat coste ryche,
Utolfe and Ewandre, Joneke had nommene,
With þe erle of Affryke and oþer grette lordes.
The kynge of Surry the kene to *syr* Cador es ȝeldene,
The Synechalle of Sotere to Segramoure hym selfene.
When þe chevalrye saw theire cheftanes were nommene,
To a cheefe foreste they chesene theire wayes,
And felede theme so feynte, they falle in þe greves,
In the ferynne of þe fyrthe, fore ferde of oure pople.
Thare myght mene see the ryche ryde in the schawes,
To rype up the Romaynez ruydlyche wondyde!
Schowttes aftyre mene, harageous knyghttez,
Be hunndrethez they hewede doune be þe holte eynys!

The King of Syria, full of grief, assembles his Saracens for vengeance.

Sir Cador and his men slay fifty thousand of them at once.

Certain knights are wounded by Saracens riding behind others.

The fight rages furiously.

The field runs blood.

Sir Clegis takes prisoner the Captain of Cordova.

Sir Cador takes the King of Syria.

The Romans fly into the forest.

Arthur's men slay many of them there.

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1880 Thus oure chevalrous mene chasez þe pople;
A few escape to a castle. To a castelle they eschewede a fewe þat eschappede.
Thane relyez þe renkez of þe rounde table,
ffor to ryotte þe wode, þer þe duke restez;
Arthur's knights seek for their companions who had been slain. 1884 Ransakes the ryndez alle, raughte up theire feres,
That in þe fightyng be-fore fay ware by-levyde.
Sir Cador bids them carry them to the King. Sir Cador garte chare theym, and covere theme faire,
Kariede theme to the kynge with his beste knyghttez;
He goes to Paris with the prisoners, and quickly returns to Arthur. 1888 And passez un-to Paresche with presoners hym-selfene,
Betoke theyme the proveste, pryncez and oþer;
Tase a sope in the toure, and taryez no langere,
Bot tournes tytte to þe kynge, and hym wyth tunge telles.
Then he tells him of the case that had befallen. 1892 "Syr," sais syr Cador, "a caas es be-fallene;
We hafe cownterede to day, in ȝone coste ryche,
With kyngez and kayseres, krouelle and noble,
And knyghtes and kene men clenlych arayede!
1896 Thay hade at ȝone foreste forsette us þe wayes,
At the furthe in þe fyrthe, with ferse mene of armes;
They had fought and slain many. Thare faughtte we in faythe, and foynede with sperys,
One felde with thy foo mene, and fellyd theme on lyfe.
1900 The kyng of Lebe es laide, and in þe felde levyde,
And manye of his lege mene þat þere to hym langede!
Oþer lordez are laughte of uncouthe ledes;
We hafe lede them at lenge, to lyf whilles þe lykez.
Divers of their best knights were taken prisoners, 1904 Sir Utere and syr Ewaynedyre, theis honourable knyghttez,
Be an awntere[1] of armes Joneke has nommene,
With erlez of þe Oryentte, and austerene knyghttez,
Of awncestrye þe beste mene þat to þe oste langede;
the Senator Barouns, the King of Syria, the Seneschall of Suters. 1908 The senatour Barouns es kaughte with a knyghtte,
The capitayne of Cornette, that crewelle es haldene,
The syneschalle of Suters unsaughte wyth þes oþer,
The kynge of Surry hym-selfene, and Sarazenes.
But of Arthur's knights fourteen were slain. 1912 Bot fay of ours in þe felde a fourtene knyghttez,
I wille noghte feyne ne forbere, but faythfully tellene;
Sir Beryl was killed at the first Sir Berelle es one, a banerette noble,

[1] Written in MS. *a nawntere.*

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Was killyde at þe fyrste come with a kynge ryche; — beginning of the fray.
Sir Alidoyke of Towelle, with his tende knyghtez,
Emange þe Turkys was tynte, and in tyme fondene;
Gude sir Mawrelle of Mauncez, and Mawrene his broþer,
Sir Meneduke of Mentoche, with mervailous knyghttez."
Thane the worthy kynge wrythes, and wepede with his enghne, — Then Arthur was grieved,
Karpes to his cosyne syr Cador theis wordez,—
"Sir Cador, thi corage confundez us alle! — and speaks to his cousin Sir Cador
Kowardely thow castez owtte alle my beste knyghttez! — bitter words.
To putte mene in perille, it es no pryce holdene,
Bot þe pertyes ware purvayede, and powere arayede;
When they ware stade on a strenghe, þou sulde hafe with-stondene,
Bot ȝif thowe wolde alle my steryne stroye for þe nonys!"
"Sir," sair syr Cador, "ȝe knowe wele ȝourselvene;
ȝe are kynge in this kythe, karpe whatte ȝow lykys! — Sir Cador replies with dignity.
Salle never upbrayde me, þat to þi burde langes,
That I sulde blyne for theire boste, thi byddyng to wyrche;
Whene any stirttez to stale, stuffe þame þe bettere,
Ore thei wille be stonayede, and stroyede in ȝone strayte londez.
I dide my delygens to daye, I doo me one lordez, — He had only done his duty,
And in daungere of dede fore dyverse knyghttez,
I hafe no grace to þi gree, bot syche grett wordez;
ȝif I heven my herte, my hape es no bettyre." — but is ill repaid by such hard words.
ȝofe syr Arthure ware angerde, he ansuers faire,
"Thow has doughttily donne, syr duke, with thi handez, — Then Arthur retracts.
And has donne thy dever with my dere knyghttez; — He acknowledges Cador had done his devoir.
ffor-thy thow arte demyde, with dukes and erlez,
ffor one of þe doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever! — He was one of the bravest of the brave,
Thare es none ischewe of us, on this erthe sprongene; — and heir apparent to the throne.
Thow arte apparant to be ayere, are one of thi childyre; — Therefore he would never forsake him.
Thow arte my sister sone, for-sake salle I never!"
Thane gerte he in his awene tente a table be sette, — Then he makes a noble feast in his own tent for the
And tryede in with tromppez travaillede biernez; — knights who had been engaged in the fight.
Serfede them solempnely with selkouthe metez,

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Swythe semly in syghte with sylverene dischees.
Whene the senatours harde saye þat it so happenede,
But the Senators of Rome tell the Emperor of the defeat of his men. They saide to þe emperour, "thi seggez are suppryssede!
Sir Arthure, thyne enmy has owterayede þi lordez,
That rode for þe rescowe of ȝone riche knyghttez!
Thow dosse bot tynnez þi tyme, and turmenttez þi pople;
He had been betrayed by those he trusted most. Thow arte be-trayede of þi mene, that moste thow on traystede.
That schalle turne the to tene and torfere for ever."
Then the Emperor is very wroth. Than the emperour irus was angerde at his herte,
ffor oure valyant biernez siche prowesche had wonnene.
With kynge and with kaysere to consayle they wende,
Soverayngez of Sarazenez, and senatours manye;
He assembles a council of war. Thus he semblez fulle sone certayne lordez,
And in the assemble thane he sais them theis wordez,—
He tells them his purpose to go into Saxony, "My herte sothely es sette, assente ȝif ȝowe lykes,
To seke into Sexone, with my sekyre knyghttez,
To fyghte with my foo mene, if fortune me happene,
ȝif I may fynde the freke with-in the foure halvez;
and enter into Augusta, Or entire in-to Awguste awnters to seke,
And byde with my balde mene with-in þe burghe ryche;
to riot and revel till the arrival of Sir Leo and the Lords of Lombardy. Riste us and revelle, and ryotte oure selfene,
Lende þare in delytte in lordechippez ynewe,
To syr Leo be comene with alle his lele knyghtez,
With lordez of Lumberdye, to lette hyme the wayes."
King Arthur, getting intelligence of this, withdraws his men secretly by the woods; Bot owre wyese kyng es warre to wayttene his renkes,
And wyesly by þe woddez voydez his oste;
Gerte felschene his fyrez, flawmande fulle heghe,
takes the shortest road into Saxony; Trussene fulle traystely, and treunt there aftyre.
Sepene into Sessoyne, he soughte at the gayneste,
And at the surs of þe sonne dissevérez his knyghttez:
fforsette theme the cite appone sere halfez,
suddenly attacks the city with seven bands. So-daynly on iche halfe, with sevene grett stales.
Anely in the vale a vawewarde enbusches;
Sir Valiant makes a vow to vanquish the Viscount of Rome. Sir Valyant of Vyleris, with valyant knyghttez,
Be-fore þe kyngez visage made siche avowez,

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To venquyse by victorie the vescownte of Rome!
ffor-thi the kynge chargez hym, what chaunce so be-falle,
Cheftayne of the cheekke, with chevalrous knyghttez,
And sythyne meles with mouthe, þat he moste traystez:
Demenys the medylwarde menskfully hyme selfene,
ffittes his fote-mene, alles hym faire thynkkes;
On frounte in the fore breste, the flour of his knyghtez,
His archers on aythere halfe he ordaynede þer-aftyre
To schake in a sheltrone, to schotte whene þame lykez;
He arrayed in þe rerewarde fulle rialle knyghtez,
With renkkes renownd of þe rounde table,
Sir Raynalde, sir Richere, that rade was never,
The riche Duke of Rowne wyt ryders ynewe;
Sir Cayous, sir Clegis, and clene mene of armes,
The kyng castes to kepe be þaa clere strandes.
Sir Lott and syr Launcelott, þise lordly knyghttez,
Salle lenge on his lefte hande, wyth legyones ynewe,
To meve in þe morne, while ȝif þe myste happynne;
Sir Cador of Cornewaile, and his kene knyghtez,
To kepe at þe Karfuke, to close in ther o þere:
He plantez in siche placez pryncez and erlez,
That no powere sulde passe be no prevé wayes.
Bot the emperour onone, with honourable knyghtez
and erlez, enteres the vale, awnters to seke,
And fyndez sir Arthure with hostez arayede;
And at his in-come, to ekkene his sorowe,
Oure burlyche bolde kynge appone the bente howes,
With his bataile one brede, and baners displayede.
He hade þe ceté for-sett appone sere halfes,
Bothe the clewez and þe clyfez with clene mene of armez!
The mosse and þe marrasse, the mounttez so hye,
With gret multytude of mene, to marre hym in þe wayes.
Whene syr Lucius sees, he sais to his lordez,
"This traytour has truaunt[1] this tresone to wyrche!
He has the ceté forsett appone sere halfez,

The King gives him command of the vanguard;
he himself directs the centre.
He arranges the archers on either flank,
Places renowned knights for a rearguard.
Sir Lott and Sir Lancelot command a band on the left hand, which is to move in the mist of early morning.
Sir Cador and his men are to keep guard over the passes.
The Emperor and his knights quickly enter the vale in search of adventures.
He finds Arthur's host drawn up in battle array,
and all the positions occupied.
Then Sir Lucius declares with

[1] Or treunt.

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wrath that there is no way else but to fight, for fly he may not.

Alle þe clewez and the cleyffez with clene mene of armez!
Here es no waye i-wys, ne no wytt elles,
Bot feghte with oure foo-mene, for flee may we never!
Thane this ryche mane rathe arayes his byernez,

He arrays his rich Romans.

Rowlede his Romaynez, and realle knyghtez;

The Viscount is in the van.

Buschez in the avawmewarde the vescounte of Rome,
ffro Viterbe to Venyse, theis valyante knyghtez:

Hoists his standard, the golden dragon enamelled with eagles.

Dresses up dredfully the dragone of golde,
With egles al-over, enamelede of sable;

They drink and make merry.

Drawene dreghely the wyne, and drynkyne thereaftyre,
Dukkez and dusseperez, dubbede knyghtez,
ffor dauncesynge of Duche-mene, and dynnynge of pypez,
Alle dynned fore dyne that in þe dale hovede.

Sir Lucius exhorts them to think on the great renown of Rome — how it had conquered all Christendom,

And thane syr Lucius on lowde said lordlyche wordez,
"Thynke one the myche renownne of ȝour ryche fadyrs;
And the riatours of Rome, þat regnede with lordez;
And the renkez over rane alle that regnede in erthe,
Encrochede alle Cristyndome be craftes of armes;
In everiche a viage the victorie was haldene;

and all the land of the Saracens, from Jaffa to the gates of Paradise.

In sette alle þe Sarazenes within sevene wyntter,
The parte ffro the Porte Jaffe to Paradyse ȝatez!

Without doubt they will quickly reduce these rebels.

Thoghe a rewme be rebelle, we rekke it bot lyttille!
It es resone and righte the renke be restreynede!
Do dresse we tharefore, and byde we no langere,
ffore dredlesse with-owttyne dowtte, the daye schalle be ourez!"

Whene þeise wordez was saide, the Walsche kynge hym selfene
Was warre of this wyderwyne, þat werrayede his knyghttez:

Arthur calls upon the Viscount of Valence, and threatens him with vengeance.

Brothely in the vale with voyce he ascryez,—
"Viscownte of Valewnce, envyous of dedys,
The vassalage of Viterbe to daye schalle be revengede!
Unvenquiste for þis place voyde schalle I never!"

The Viscount boldly prepares for the fray.

Thane the vyscownte valiante, with a voyse noble,
Avoyedyde the avaweward, enverounde his horse;

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He drissede in a derfe schelde, endenttyd *with* sable,
With a dragone engowschede, dredfulle to schewe,
Devorande a dolphyne with dolefulle lates,
In seyne that oure sove*r*aygne sulde be distroyede,
And alle done of dawez with dynttez of swreddez;
ffor thare es noghte bot dede thare the dragone es raissede!
Thane the comlyche kynge castez in fewtyre,
With a crewelle launce cowpez fulle evene
Abowne *þe* spayre a spanne, emange *þe* schortte rybbys,
That the splent and the spleene on the spere lengez!
The blode sprente owtte and sprede as *þe* horse spryngez,
And he sproulez fulle spakely, bot spekes he no more!
And thus has *syr* Valyant haldene his avowez,
And venqwyste *þe* viscownte, thate victor was haldene!
Thane *syr* Ewayne *syr* Fytz Uriene fulle enkerlye rydez
Onone to the emp*e*rou*r* his egle to towche;
Thrughe his brode bataile he buskes be-lyfe,
Braydez owt his brande *with* a blyth chere,
Roverssede it redelye, and awaye rydys;
fferkez in with the fewle in his faire handez,
And ffittez in freely one ffrounte *with* his feris.
Now buskez *syr* Lanncelot, and braydez fulle evene
To *syr* Luci*us* the lorde, and lothelye hyme hyttez;
Thurghe pawnce *and* platez he percede the maylez,
That the prowde pensell*e* in his pawnche lengez!
The hede hayled*e* owtt be-hynde ane halfe fote large,
Thurghe hawberke and hanche, *with* *þe* harde wapyne!
The stede and the steryne mane strykes to *þe* grownde,
Strake downe a standerde, and to his stale wendez!
"Me lykez wele," sais *syr* Loth, "*þ*one lordez are delyv*e*rede!
The lott lengez nowe on me, *with* leve of my lorde:
To day salle my name be laide, and my life aftyre,
Bot some leppe fro the lyfe, that one *þ*one lawnde hovez!"
Thane strekez the steryne, and streynys his brydylle,
Strykez in-to the stowre on a stede ryche,

His device is a dragon devouring a dolphin.

Sir Valiant lays his lance in rest, and pierces him through the short ribs.

And thus did he redeem his word.

Sir Ewaine makes a bold attempt to reach the Emperor.

Sir Lancelot slays the Lord Lucius.

Sir Lott rejoices that his turn is now come.

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He slays a giant,

Enjoynede with a geaunt, and jaggede hym thorowe!
Jolyly this gentille for-justede anoþer,
Wroghte wayes fulle wyde, werrayande knyghtez,
And wondes alle wathely, that in þe waye stondez!
ffyghttez with alle the ffrappe a furlange of waye,

and many warriors beside.

ffelled fele appone felde with his faire wapene,
Venqwiste and has the victorie of valyaunt knyghtez,
And alle enverounde the vale, and voyde whene hym likede!

The British bowmen discharge their arrows.

Thane bowmene of Bretayne brothely ther-aftyre
Bekerde with bregaundez of ferre in tha laundez,
With flonez fleterede þay flitt fulle frescly þer frekez,
ffichene with fetheris thurghe þe fyne maylez:
Sithe flyttynge es foule that so the flesche derys,
That flowe o ferrome in flawnkkes of stedez;

The Dutchmen throw darts.

Dartes the Duche-mene daltene a3aynes,
With derfe dynttez of dede, dagges thurghe scheldez;
Qwarelles qwayntly swappez thorowe knyghtez
With iryne so wekyrly, that wynche they never.

Many are slain by the sharp arrows.

So they schérenkene fore schotte of þe scharppe arowes,
That all the scheltrone schonte, and schoderide at ones!
Thane riche stedes rependez, and rasches one armes;
The hale howndrethe one hye appone heyghe lygges,
Bot 3itte þe hathelieste on hy, haythene and oþer;

But the giants make a terrible charge,

All hoursches over hede harmes to wyrke.
And alle theis geauntez be-fore, engenderide with fendez,
Joynez on sir Jenitalle, and gentille knyghtez,

and with their iron clubs destroy many cavaliers on white steeds.

With clubbez of clene stele clenkkede in helmes,
Graschede doune crestez, and craschede braynez;
Kyllede cousers and coverde stedes,
Choppode thurghe chevalers one chalke-whytte stedez.
Was never stele ne stede myghte stande them a3aynez,

Nothing can stand against them until Arthur comes.

Bot stonays and strykez doune, that in þe stale hovys.
Tille þe conquerour come with his kene knyghttez,
With crowelle contenaunce he cryede fulle lowde,—

He despises them,

"I wende no Bretouns walde bee basschede for so lyttille,

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And fore bare-legyde boyes, *þat* one the bente hovys!"
He clekys owtte Collbrande fulle clenlyche burneschte, and plucking out Colbrand, quickly cuts the giant Golapas in two at the knees;
Graythes hyme to Golapas, þat grevyde moste;
Kuttes hyme evene by *þe* knees clenly in sondyre.
"Come downe," *quod* the kynge, "and karpe to thy ferys!
Thowe arte to hye by *þe* halfe, I hete *þe* in trouthe! telling him "he was too high by half." Then he strikes off his head.
Thowe salle be handsomere hye, *with* *þe* helpe of my Lorde!"
With þat stelene brande he strake ofe his hede.
Sterynly in *þat* stoure he strykes anoþer.
Thus he settez on sevene with his sekyre knyghttez: He and his knights slay sixty giants.
Whylles sexty ware servede soo, ne sessede they never!
And thus at the joyenyge the geauntez are dystroyede,
And at *þat* journey for-justede with gentille lordez.
Than the Romaynes, and the renkkes of *þe* rounde table, The Romans rally and make a fierce resistance.
Rewles them in arraye, rerewarde ande oþer,
With wyghte wapynez of werre, thay wroghtene one helmes,
Rittez with rennke stele fulle ryalle maylez;
Bot they fut theme fayre, thes frekk byernez,
ffewters in freely one fferaunte stedes,
ffoynes fulle felly with flyschande speris,
ffretene of orfrayes feste appone scheldez.
So fele fay es in fyghte appone *þe* felde levyde, Many men are slain. Rivers of blood run into the sea.
That iche a furthe in the firthe of rede blode rynnys!
By that swyftely one swarthe *þe* swett es bylevede,
Swerdez swangene in two, sweltand knyghtez
Lyes wyde opyne welterande one wálopande stedez;
Wondes of wale mene werkande sydys,
ffacez fetteled unfaire in filterede lakes,
Alle craysed for-trodyne with trappede stedez,
The faireste fygured folde that fygurede was ever,
Alles ferre alles a furlange, a thosande at ones!
Be than the Romaynez ware rebuykyde a lyttille, The Romans begin to retreat, and Arthur presses on them.
With-drawes theyme drerely, and dreches no lengare;
Oure prynce with his powere persewes theyme aftyre,

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Prekez one þe proudeste with his price knyghttez.
Sir Kayous, sir Clegis, with clene mene of armez,
Enconters theme at þe clyffe with clene mene of armez;
Sir Cayous and his men slay five hundred. ffyghttes faste in þe fyrth, frythes no wapene,
ffelled at þe firste come fyfe hundrethe at ones!
And when they fande theym foresett with oure fers knyghtez,
ffewe mene agayne fele, mot fyche theme bettyre;
ffeghttez with alle þe frappe, foynes with speres,
And faughte with the frekkeste þat to Fraunce langez.
He kills a king, Bot sir Kayous þe kene castis in fewtyre,
Chasez one a coursere, and to a kynge rydys;
With a launce of Lettowe he thirllez his sydez,
That the lyver and þe lunggez on þe launce lengez.
The schafte scodyrde and schott in the schire byerne,
And soughte thorowowte þe schelde, and in þe schalke rystez.
but is sorely wounded by a coward knight from behind. Bot Kayous at the income was kepyd un-fayre
With a cowarde knyghte of þe kythe ryche;
At the turnynge that tyme the traytours hym hitte
In thorowe the felettes, and in þe flawnke aftyre,
That the boustous launce þe bewelles attamede,
þat braste at þe brawlyng, and brake in þe myddys.
Sir Kayous knewe wele, be þat kyde wounde,
That he was dede of þe dynte, and done owte of lyfe.
He feels that he has received a mortal wound, but strikes down the coward. Than he raykes one arraye and one rawe rydez,
One this ryalle his dede to revenge;
"Kepe the, cowarde," and calles hym sone,
Cleves hym wyth his clere brande clenliche in sondire!
"Hadde thow wele delte thy dynt with thi handes,
I hade forgeffene þe my dede, be Crist now of hewyne!"
He makes his way to Arthur, and tells him that he is dying. He weyndes to þe wyese kynge, and wynly hym gretes,
"I am wathely woundide, waresche mone I never!
Wirke nowe thi wirchipe, as þe worlde askes,
And brynge me to beryelle, byd I no more!
He bids him greet for him the Grete wele my ladye þe qwene, ȝife þe werlde happyne,

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And alle þe burliche birdes þat to hir boure lengez ; Queen, the nobles of the court, and his wife.
And my worthily weife, þat wrethide me never,
Bid hire fore hir wyrchipe wirke for my saulle!"
The kyngez confessour come, with Criste in his handes, Then comes the King's confessor with the holy wafer.
ffor to comforthe the knyghte, kende hym þe wordes ;
The knyghte coueride on his knees with a kaunt herte,
And caughte his Creatoure þat comfurthes us alle! Cayous receives him with devotion.
Thane remmes þe riche kynge fore rewthe at his herte, Then Arthur, full of grief, rushes into the fray to avenge him.
Rydes in-to rowte his dede to revenge ;
Presede in-to þe plumpe, and with a prynce metes,
That was ayere of Egipt in thos este marches ;
Cleves hym with Collbrande clenlyche in sondyre ! He cleaves an Egyptian prince asunder.
He broches evene thorowe þe byerne, and þe sadille bristes,
And at þe bake of þe blonke þe bewelles entamede !
Manly in his malycoly he metes anoþer, Another he chops in half.
The medille of þat myghtty, þat hym myche grevede ;
He merkes thurghe the maylez the myddes in sondyre,
That the myddys of þe mane on þe mounte fallez,
þe toþer halfe of þe haunche on þe horse levyde.
Of þat hurte, alls I hope, heles he never !
He schotte thorowe þe schiltrouns with his scharpe wapene, He cuts his way through the battle.
Schalkez he schrede thurghe, and schrenkede maylez ;
Baneres he bare downne, bryttenede scheldes,
Brothely with browne stele his brethe he þare wrekes :
Wrothely he wryththis by wyghtnesse of strenghe,
Woundes þese whydyrewyns, werrayede knyghttes,
Threppede thorowe þe thykkys thryttene sythis,
Thryngez throly in the thrange, and chis evene aftyre !
Thane sir Gawayne the gude, with wyrchipfulle knyghttez, Sir Gawaine attacks the Emperor Luclus.
Wendez in the avawewarde be tha wodde hemmys ;
Was warre of syr Lucius, one launde there he hovys,
With lordez and ligge mene, that to hyme-selfe lengede.
Thane the emperour enkerly askes hym sonne,
" What wille thow, Gawayne, wyrke with thi wapyne ?
I watte be thi waveryng, thow willnez aftyre sorowe ;

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I sall*e* be wrokyn*e* on thi wrethe, for all*e* thi grete wordez?"

But Lucius with his long sword wounds Sir Lionel,

He laughte owtte a lange swerde, and luyschede one ffaste,
And *syr* Lyonell*e* in the launde lordely hym strykes,
Hittes hym on *þe* hede, *þat þe* helme bristis;
Hurttes his herne-pane an haunde-brede large!
Thus he layes one *þe* lum*p*pe, and lordlye *þem*e served,
Wondide worthily wirchipfull*e* knyghttez!

and makes the blood flow from Sir Florent.

ffighttez w*ith* Florent that beste es of swerdez,
Tille *þe* fomande blode tille his fyste rynnes!
Thane *þe* Romayns relevyde, *þat* are ware rebuykkyde,
And all*e* to-rattys oure men*e* with theire riste horsses;

The Romans, excited by his bravery, get the better of Arthur's men.

ffore they see *þaire* cheftayne be chauffede so sore,
They chasse and choppe doun*e* oure chevalrous knyghttes!
Sir Bedwere was borne thurghe, and his breste thyrllede,

Sir Bedwere is slain.

With a burlyche braunde, brode at *þe* hiltes;
The ryall*e* raunke stele to his hertte rynnys,
And he rusches to *þe* erthe, rewthe es the more!

Then Arthur comes to the rescue.

Thane *þe* conqu*erour* tuke kepe, and come with his strenghes
To reschewe *þe* ryche men*e* of *þe* rounde table,
To owttraye *þe* emp*erour*, ȝif auntire it schewe,
Ewyn*e* to *þe* egle, and Arthure askryes.
The emp*erour* thane egerly at Arthure he strykez,

The Emperor strikes Arthur on the visor, and wounds his face.

Awkwarde on *þe* umbrere, and egerly hym hittez!
The nakyde swerde at *þe* nese noyes hym sare,
The blode of bolde kyng*e* ov*er þe* breste rynnys,
Beblede at *þe* brode schelde and *þe* bryghte mayles!
Oure bolde kyng*e* bowes *þe* blonke be *þe* bryghte brydylle,

Arthur gives him a buffet that cuts through his head and breast.

With his burlyche brande a buffette hym reches,
Thourghe *þe* brene and *þe* breste w*ith* his bryghte wapyne,
O-slante doun*e* fro *þe* slote he slyttes at ones!

Sir Lucius dies, and the Romans fly.

Thus endys *þe* emp*erour* of Arthure hondes,
And all his austeryn*e* oste *þare*-of ware affrayede!
Now they ferke to *þe* fyrthe, a fewe *þat* are levede,
ffor ferdnesse of oure folke, by *þe* fresche strandez!

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The floure of oure ferse mene one fferant stedez
ffolowes frekly on þe frekes, thate ffrayede was never. Arthur's men pursue.
Thane þe kyde conquerour cryes fulle lowde,—
"Cosyne of Cornewaile, take kepe to þi-selfene,
That no captayne be kepyde for none silver, The King bids them give no quarter.
Or syr Kayous dede be cruelly vengede!"
"Nay," sais syr Cador, "so me Criste helpe!
Thare ne es kaysere ne kynge, þat undire Criste rygnnes, Sir Cador declares that he will spare neither king nor kaisar.
Þat I ne schalle kille colde dede be crafte of my handez!"
Thare myghte mene see chiftaynes, on chalke whitte stedez,
Choppe doune in the chaas chevalrye noble;
Romaynes þe rycheste and ryalle kynges,
Braste with ranke stele theire rybbys in sondyre! A fearful carnage follows.
Grayves fore-brustene thurghe burneste helmes,
With brandez for-brittenede one brede in þe laundez;
They hewede doune haythene mene with hiltede swerdez, Heathen men are slain by hundreds.
Be hole hundrethez on hye, by þe holte eynyes!
Thare myghte no silver theym save, ne socoure theire lyves,
Sowdane ne Sarazene,—ne senatour of Rome!
Thane relevis þe renkes of the rounde table
Be þe riche revare, that rynnys so faire;
Lugegez thaym luflye by þa lyghte strandez,
Alle on lawe in þe lawnde, that lordlyche byernes: Arthur's men plunder the rich camp of the Romans.
Thay kaire to þe karyage, and tuke whate them likes,
Kamelles and sekadrisses, and cofirs fulle riche,
Hekes and hakkenays, and horses of armes,
Howsynge and herbergage of heythene kyngez;
They drewe owt of dromondaries dyverse lordes, Horses, camels, dromedaries, milk-white mules, elephants, and many marvellous beasts are captured.
Moyllez mylke whitte, and mervaillous bestez,
Elfaydes, and Arrabys, and olyfauntez noble,
Þer are of þe Oryent, with honourable kynges.
Bot syr Arthure onone ayeres þer-aftyre
Ewyne to the Emperour, with honourable kyngis;
Laughte hym upe fulle lovelyly with lordliche knyghttez,
And ledde hyme to þe layere, thare the kyng lygges.

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Thanc harawdez heghely, at heste of the lordes,
Hunttes upe the haythemene, that on heghte lygges,
The bodies of the Emperor and chief men of Rome are embalmed and wrapped in lead, 2296 The Sowdane of Surry, and certayne kynges,
Sexty of þe cheefe senatours of Rome.
Thane they bussches and bawmede þaire honourliche kynges,
Sewed theme in sendelle sexti faulde aftire,
2300 Lappede them in lede, lesse that they schulde
Chawnge or chawffe, ȝif þay myghte escheffe;
enclosed in chests, and sent to Rome with their banners displayed over them. Closed in kystys clene un-to Rome,
With theire baners abowne, theire bagis there-undyre,
2304 In whate countre þay kaire that knyghttes myghte knawe
Iche kynge be his colours, in kyth whare lengede.
Onone one the secounde daye, sone by þe morne,
Twa senatours ther come, and certayne knyghttez,
2308 Hodles fro þe hethe, over þe holte eynes,
Two Senators come barefoot and kneel before the conqueror. Barefote over þe bente, with brondes so ryche,
Bowes to þe bolde kynge, and biddis hym þe hiltes,
Whethire he wille hang theym or hedde, or halde theyme on lyfe:
2312 Knelyde be-fore þe conquerour in kyrtilles allone;
With carefulle contenaunce þay karpide þese wordes,—
"Twa senatours we are, thi subgettez of Rome,
That has savede oure lyfe by þeise salte strandys;
2316 Hyd us in þe heghe wode, thurghe þe helpynge of Criste!
Besekes the of socoure, as soveraygne and lorde!
Grante us lyffe and lyme with liberalle herte,
ffor his luffe that the lente this lordchipe in erthe!"
The King grants them their lives on condition of their carrying a message for him to Rome. 2320 "I graunte," *quod* gude kynge, "thurghe grace of myselfene,
I giffe ȝowe lyffe and lyme, and leve for to passe,
So ȝe doo my message menskefully at Rome,
That ilke charge þat I ȝow ȝiffe here be-fore my cheefe knyghttez."
2324 "ȝis," sais the senatours, "that salle we ensure,
Sekerly be oure trowthes thi sayenges to fullfille;

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We salle lett for no lede þat lyffes in erthe,
ffore pape ne for potestate, ne prynce so noble,
That ne salle lelely in lande thi letteres pronounce,
ffor duke ne fore dussepere, to dye in þe payne!"
Thane the banerettez of Bretayne broghte þeme to tentes;
There barbours ware bownne, with basyns one lofte,
With warme watire i-wys they wette theme fulle sone;
They schovene this schalkes scharpely ther-aftyre,
To rekkene theis Romaynes recreaunt and ȝoldene;
ffor-thy schove they theme to schewe, for skomfitte of Rome.

The British lords bring barbers and basons and baths for them, in order to prove their submission.

They coupylde þe kystys on kamelles be-lyve,
On asses and arrabyes, theis honourable kynges;
The emperoure for honoure, alle by hym one,
Evene appone ane olyfaunte, hys egle owtt overe;
Be-kende theme the captyfis the kynge dide hym-selfene,
And alle byfore his kene mene karpede thees wordes,—
"Here are the kystis," *quod* the kyng, "kaire over þe mownttez;
Mette fulle monee þat ȝe have mekylle ȝernede,
The taxe and þe trebutte of tene schore wynteres,
That was tenefully tynte in tyme of oure elders:
Saye to the senatoure, þe ceté þat ȝemes,
That I sende hyme þe somme, assaye how hyme likes!
Bott byde theme nevere be so bolde, whylles my blode regnes,
Efte for to brawllee þeme for my brode landez,
Ne to aske trybut ne taxe be nakyne tytle,
Bot syche tresoure as this, whilles my tyme lastez."

They fastened the coffins two and two on camels.

The Emperor's body, for honour, was by itself on an elephant.

Arthur charges them to say that they have brought the arrears of tribute due from him to Rome.

This is the only tribute they will ever get from him.

Nowe they raike to Rome the redyeste wayes,
Knylles in the capatoylle, and comowns assembles,
Soverayngez and senatours, the ceté þat ȝemes;
Be-kende theme the caryage, kystis and oþer,
Alls þe conquerour comaunde with cruelle wordes.
"We hafe trystily trayvellede þis tributte to feche,
The taxe and þe trewage of fowre score wynteris,

They hasten to Rome and summon the people to the Capitol.

Perform Arthur's message as he directed.

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They have brought the tax dues from England and Ireland, and all the west.

Of Iglande, of Irelande and alle þir owtt illes,
That Arthure in the occedente ocupyes att ones:
He byddis ȝow nevere be so bolde, whills his blode regnes
To brawle ȝowe fore Bretayne ne his brode landes,
Ne aske hyme trebute ne taxe be nonkyns title,
Bot syche tresoure as this, whills his tyme lastis.

They declare that they have suffered defeat and great loss,

We haffe foughttene in ffrance, and us es foule happenede,
And alle oure myche faire folke faye are by-levede!
Eschappide there ne chevallrye, ne cheftaynes noþer,
Bott choppede downne in the chasse, syche chawnce es be-fallene!
We rede ȝe store ȝowe of stone, and stuffene ȝour walles:

and bid the Romans beware.

ȝow wakkens wandrethe and werre; be-ware, ȝif ȝow lykes!"

This great battle between Arthur and the Romans was fought in the calends of May.

In the kalendez of Maye this caas es be-fallene:
The roy ryalle renownde, with his rownde table,
One the coste of Constantyne by þe clere strandez,

It was a blow from which the Romans could not recover.

Has þe Romaynes ryche rebuykede for ever!
Whene he hade foughttene in Fraunce, and the felde wonnene,
And fersely his foomene fellde owtte of lyfe,

After the defeat Arthur buries his knights.

He bydes for þe beryenge of his bolde knyghtez,
That in batelle with brandez ware broughte owte of lyfe.

Sir Bedwere at Bayonne;

He beryes at Bayone syr Bedwere þe ryche;

Sir Cayous at Camelot;

The cors of Kayone þe kene at Came es belevefede,
Koveride with a crystalle clenly alle over;
His fadyre conqueride þat kyth knyghtly with hondes:

In Burgundy, Berade, and Baldwin, and Bedwar;

Seyne in Burgoyne he bade to bery mo knyghttez,
Sir Berade and Bawdwyne, sir Bedwar þe ryche,

Sir Cador at Camelot.

And syr Cador at Came, as his kynde askes.

In the August after Arthur enters into Germany,

Thane syr Arthure onone, in þe Auguste þer-aftyre,
Entores to Almayne wyth ostez arrayed;

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2388 Lengez at Lusscheburghe, to lechene hys knyghttez, — and encamps at Luxemburg.
With his lele ligge-mene, as lorde in his awene:
And one *Chris*pofre daye a concelle he haldez, — He holds a council on Christmas-day to devise how he may conquer all the territory that he claims.
Withe kynges and kaysers, clerkkes and oþer,
2392 Comandez them kenely to caste alle þeire wittys,
How he may *con*quere by crafe the kythe þat he claymes.
Bot the conqueror kene, curtais and noble,
Karpes in the concelle theys knyghtly wordez,— He makes a speech in the council, saying that he much desires the possessions of the Duke of Lorraine,
2396 "Here es a knyghte in theis klevys, enclesside with hilles,
That I have cowayte to knawe, be-cause of his wordez,
That es Lorayne þe lele, I kepe noghte to layne;
The lordchipe es lovely, as ledes me telles:
2400 I wille that Ducherye devyse, and dele as me lykes,
And seyne dresse wyth þe duke, if destyny suffre: — who has been long a rank rebel to his Round Table.
The renke rebelle has bene un-to my rownde table,
Redy aye with Romaynes, and ryotte my landes!
2404 We salle rekkene fulle rathe, if resone so happene, — He will soon show him who is the rightful owner of those lands!
Who has ryghte to þat rente, by ryche Gode of hevene!
Thane wille I by Lumbardye lykande to schawe,
Sett lawe in þe lande, *þat* laste salle ever. — Afterwards he will go to Lombardy and then visit the tyrants of Turkey,
2408 The tyrauntez of Terkayne tempeste a littylle,
Talke with þe temperalle, whilles my tyme lastez;
I gyffe my protteccione to alle þe pope landez, — but he will give protection to all the lands of the Pope, for it is folly to offend our Father under God.
My ryche penselle of pes my pople to schewe:
2412 It es a foly to offende oure fadyr undire Gode,
Owþer Peter or Paule, þa postles of Rome.
ȝiff we spare the spirituelle, we spede bot the bettire; — If we spare the goods of the spiritualty we shall speed the better.
Whilles we have for to speke, spille salle it never!" [1]
2416 Now they spede at þe spurres, with-owttyne speche more,
To þe Marche of Meyes, theis manliche knyghtez,
That es Lorrayne alofede, as Londone es here;
Pety of þat seynȝowre, that soveraynge es holdene. — Arthur straightway leads his knights to lay siege to Metz.
2420 The kyng ferkes furthe on a faire stede,

[1] This passage may be taken as tolerably conclusive evidence that the poem was composed by an ecclesiastic.

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With ferreraunde ferawnte, and oþer foure knyghtez;
Abowte the cete þa seven*e*, thay soughte at þe nextte,
They seek a place to fix the engines. To seke them*e* a sekyre place to sett withe engeynes;
Thane they beneyde in burghe bowes of vyse,
The citizens shoot at them with arrows and bolts. Bekyrs at þe bolde kyng*e* with boustouse lates,
All-blawsters at Arthure egerly schottes,
ffor to hurte hym*e* or his horse with þat hard wapen*e*:
The king, without his shield, remains close to the walls within range of the arrows. The kynge schonte for no schotte, ne no schelde askys,
Bot schewes hym scharpely in his schene wedys;
Lenges all*e* at laysere, and lokes on*e* the wallys,
Whare þey ware laweste the ledes to assaille.
Sir Ferrere remonstrates with him for exposing himself to such danger. "Sir," said *syr* fferere, "a ffoly thowe wirkkes,
Thus nakede in thy noblaye to neghe to þe walles,
Sengely in thy surcotte, this cet*é* to reche,
And schewe þe with-in, there to schende us all*e*.
Hye us hastylye heynne, or we mon*e* full*e* happen*e*,
ffor hitt they the or thy horse, it harmes for ev*er*!"
Arthur scorns him, and tells him "Ife thowe be ferde," *quod* the kyng, "I rede thow ryde uttere,
Lesse þat þey rywe the with theire rownd wapyne!
Thow arte bot a fawntkyn*e*, ne ferly me thynkkys!
that he would be afraid of a fly that lighted on him. Þou wille be flayede for a flye þat one thy flesche lyghttes!
I am*e* nothyng*e* agaste, so me Gode helpe!
As for him, he fears not such poor creatures as these. Þof siche gadlynges be grevede, it greves me bot lyttill*e*!
Thay wyn*e* no wirchipe of me, bot wastys theire takle!
They sall*e* wante or I weende, I wagen*e* myn*e* hevede!
Never knave will be allowed to kill a crowned king. Sall*e* nev*er* harlott*e* have happe, thorowe helpe of my Lorde,
To kyll*e* a crownde kyng*e* with krysom*e* enoynttede!"
Then come the gallant troops of Arthur. Thane come þe herbarjours, harageous knyghtez,
The hale batell*e*s on*e* hye harrawnte ther-aftyre;
And oure forreours ferse, appon*e* fele halfes,
First the light forayers on nimble steeds; Come flyeande be-fore one ferawnt stedes;
fferkande in arraye theire ryall*e* knyghttez,
then the renowned champions of the Round Table; The renkez renownde of þe rownnd table:
Alle þe frekke men*e* of Fraunce folowede thare aftyre,

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ffaire fittyde one frownte, and one the felde hovys.
2456 Thane the schalkes scharpelye scheftys theire horsez,
To schewene them semly in theire scheene wedes;
Buskes in batayle with baners displayede,
With brode scheldes enbrassede, and burlyche helmys,
2460 With pennons and pennelles of ylke prynce armes,
Appayrellde with perrye and pretious stones:
The lawnces with loraynes, and lemande scheldes,
Lyghtenande as þe levenynge, and lemand al over.
2464 Thane the price mene prekes, and proves þeire horsez,
Satilles to þe ceté, appone sere halfes;
Enserches the subbarbes sadly thare-aftyre,
Discoveris of schotte-mene, and skyrmys a lyttille;
2468 Skayres þaire skottefers, and theire skowtte waches,
Brittenes theire barrers with theire bryghte wapyns;
Bett downe a barbycane, and þe brygge wynnys,
Ne hade the garnysone bene gude at þe grete ȝates,
2472 Thay hade wonne that wone be theire awene strenghe!
Thane with-drawes oure mene, and drisses theme bettyre,
ffor dred of þe drawe-brigge dasschede in sondre;
Hyes to þe harbergage, thare the kynge hovys
2476 With his battelle one heghe, horsyde on stedys;
Thane was þe prynce purvayede, and þeire places nomene,
Pyghte pavyllyons of palle, and plattes in seegge.
Thane lenge they lordly, as þeme leefe thoghte,
2480 Waches in ylke warde, as to þe werre falles,
Settes up sodaynly certayne engynes;
One Sonondaye be þe soone has a fleche ȝoldene.
The kynge calles one Florente, þat flour was of knyghttez,—
2484 "The Fraunche-mene enfeblesches, ne farly me thynkkys!
They are un-fondyde folke in þa faire marches,
ffor theme wantes þe flesche and fude that theme lykes.
Here are fforestez faire appone fele halves,
2488 And thedyre feemene are flede with freliche bestes!
Thow salle foonde to þe felle, and forraye the mountes;

and all the brave men of France following them.
They cause their steeds to curvet to show their bright caparisons.
Their banners are displayed; broad shields of brass and mighty helmets; pennons emblazoned with arms.
The lances glance like lightning.
The chief men exhibit the speed of their horses.
They encompass the city on divers sides,
skirmish with the garrison,
and break down their defences.
But the garrison at the great gates checks them.
Arthur's men withdraw to where the king was waiting.
They pitch their tents, and prepare for a regular siege.
Arthur calls for Sir Florent, and sends him on an expedition into the neighbouring country to collect supplies.

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Sir fforawnt and *syr* Florydas salle folowe thi brydylle;
Us moste with some fresche mette refresche our pople,
That are feedde in *þe* fyrthe *with þe* froyte of *þe* erthe.
Thare salle weende to *þis* viage sir Gawayne hym-selfene,
Wardayne fulle wyrchipfulle, and so hym wele semes:
Sir Wecharde, *syr* Waltyre, theis wyrchipfulle knyghtes,
With alle wyseste mene of *þe* Weste marches:
Sir Clegis, *syr* Clarybalde, *syr* Clarymownde *þe* noble,
The capytayne oo wardyfe clenlyche arrayede.
Goo now, warne alle *þe* wache, Gawayne and o*þer*,
And weendes furthe on *your* waye withowttyne moo wordes."

Sir Gawaine himself, the worshipful warden, shall accompany them,

and many other knights of name.

These fresh men of arms start in their journey through woods and over hills.

Now ferkes to *þe* fyrthe thees fresche mene of armes,
To *þe* felle so fewe, theis fresclyche byernes,
Thorowe hopes and hymlande hillys and o*þer*,
Holtis and hare woddes with heslyne schawes,
Thorowe marasse and mosse and montes so heghe;
And in the myste mornynge one a mede falles,
Mawene and un-made, maynoyrede bott lyttylle,

They fall upon a field of grass newly mown,

In swathes sweppene downe fulle of swete flo*ures*:

where they bait their horses,

Thare unbrydille*s* theis bolde, and baytes *þeire* horses,
To *þe* grygynge of *þe* daye, that byrdes gane synge;

while the birds sweetly sing.

Whylles the surs of *þe* sonne, *þat* sonde es of Cryste,
That solaces alle synfulle, *þat* syghte has in erthe.
Thane weendes owtt the wardayne, *syr* Gawayne hym-selfene,

Sir Gawaine goes forth by himself to seek adventures.

Alles he *þat* weysse was and wyghte, wondyrs to seke;
Thane was he warre of a wye wondyre wele armyde,
Baytand one a wattire banke by *þe* wodde eynis,

He sees a knight well armed,

Buskede in brenyes bryghte to be-halde,
Enbrassede a brode schelde on a blonke ryche,
With birenne ony borne, hot a boye one

and a page carrying his spear.

Hoves by hym on a blonke, and his spere holdes;
He bare sessenande in golde thre grayhondes of sable,

On his shield his coat of arms was displayed.

With chapes a cheynes of chalke whytte sylver,
A charbocle in *þe* cheefe, chawngawnde of hewes,

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And a cheefe anterous, chalange who lykes.
Sir Gawayne glystes on the gome with a glade wille!
A grete spere fro his grome he grypes in hondes,
Gyrdes ewene overe the streme one a stede ryche
To þat steryne in stour, one strenghe þare he hovys!
Egerly one Inglisce Arthure he askryes,
The toþer irouslye ansuers hyme sone
On a launde of Lorrayne with a lowde stevene,
That ledes myghte lystene þe lenghe of a myle!
"Whedyr prykkes thow, pilour, þat profers so large?
Here pykes thowe no praye, profire whene þe lykes!
Bot thow in þis perelle put of the bettire,
Thow salle be my presonere, for alle thy prowde lates!"
"Sir," sais syr Gawayne, "so me Gode helpe!
Siche glaverande gomes greves me bot lyttille!
Bot if thowe graythe thy gere, the wille grefe happene,
Or thowe goo of þis greve, for alle thy grete wordes!"
Thane þeire launces they lachene, thes lordlyche byernez,
Laggene with longe speres one lyarde stedes;
Cowpene at awntere be brastes of armes,
Tille bothe þe crowelle speres broustene att ones!
Thorowe scheldys þey schotte, and scherde thorowe males,
Bothe schere thorowe schoulders a schaftmonde large!
Thus worthylye þes wyes wondede ere bothene;
Or they wreke þeme of wrethe a-waye wille þey never!
Than they raughte in the reyne and a-gayne rydes,
Redely theis rathe mene rusches owtte swordez,
Hittes one hellmes fulle hertelyche dynttys,
Hewes appone hawberkes with fulle harde wapyns!
ffulle stowttly þey stryke thire steryne knyghttes,
Stokes at þe stomake with stelyne poynttes,
ffeghttene and floresche withe flawmande swerdez,
Tille þe flawes of fyre flawmes one theire helmes.
Thane syr Gawayne was grevede, and grythgide fulle sore;
With Galuthe his gude swerde grymlye he strykes!
Clefe þe knyghttes schelde clenliche in sondre!

Sir Gawaine beholds him with great joy, and goes across the stream towards him.

He shouts his cry, "Arthur of England."

The other shouts "Lorraine."

Then does the strange knight declare that Gawaine shall be his prisoner.

Sir Gawaine treats his great words with contempt.

Then they lay their spears in rest, and meet.

Both the spears strike fair, and wound the knights.

Then they rein in their horses and return to the fight with swords.

Fearful blows are exchanged.

Sir Gawaine waxes wroth, and strikes grimly with his sword Galuth.

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He cleaves the knight's shield asunder, and lays open his side.

Who lukes to þe lefte syde, whene his horse launches,
With þe lyghte of þe sonne men myghte see his lyvere!
Thane granes þe gome fore greefe of his wondys,

The knight strikes fiercely at Sir Gawaine.

And gyrdis at *syr* Gawayne, as he by glentis;
And awkewarde egerly sore he hym smyttes;
An alet enamelde he oches in sondire,
Bristes þe rerebrace with the bronde ryche,
Kerves of at þe coutere with þe clene egge,
Anetis þe avawmbrace vrayllede with silver!

He cuts through his armour and draws blood,

Thorowe a dowble vesture of velvett ryche,
With þe venymous swerde a vayne has he towchede!
That voydes so violently þat alle his witte changede!
The vesere, the aventaile, his vesturis ryche,

which flows over all his dress.

With the valyant blode was verrede alle over!
Thane this tyrante tite turnes þe brydille,
Talkes un-tendirly, and sais, "þow arte towchede!

Then the knight jeers at him, and says the blood shall never be staunched.

Us bus have a blode bande, or thi ble change,
ffor alle þe barbours of Bretayne salle noghte thy blode stawnche!
ffor he þat es blemeste with þis brade brande, blyne schalle he never."

Sir Gawaine despises his words,

"ȝa," *quod syr* Gawayne, "thow greves me bot lyttille!
Thowe wenys to glopyne me with thy gret wordez!
Thow trowes with thy talkynge þat my harte talmes!
Thow betydes torfere or thowe hyene turne,

but would know what can stop the bleeding.

Bot thow telle me tytte, and tarye no lengere,
What may staunche this blode þat thus faste rynnes."
"ȝife I say þe sothely, and sekire þe my trowthe,

The knight will tell him if Gawaine will allow him to have shrift and prepare himself for his end.

No surggone in Salarne salle save þe bettyre;
With-thy þat thowe suffre me, for sake of thy Cryste,
To schewe schortly my schrifte, and schape for myne ende."

Gawaine readily grants this.

"ȝis," *quod syr* Gawayne, "so me God helpe!
I gyfe þe grace and graunt, thofe þou hafe grefe servede!
With-thy thowe say me sothe what thowe here sekes,
Thus sengilly and sulayne alle þi-selfe one;

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And whate laye thow leves one, layne noghte þe sothe,
And whate legyaunce, and whare þow arte lorde."
"My name es *syr* Priamus; a prince es my fadyre, — The stranger knight tells him that his name is Sir Priamus, son of a prince,
Praysede in his pertyes with provede kynges;
In Rome thare he regnes he es riche haldene;
He has bene rebelle to Rome, and redene theire landes, — who rebelled against Rome, and gained a kingdom.
Werreyand weisely wyntters and ȝeres,
Be witt and be wyssdome, and be wyghte strenghe,
And be wyrchipfulle werre his awene has he wonne.
He es of Alexandire blode, overlynge of kynges, — He is of the blood of Alexander and Hector of Troy;
The uncle of his ayele, *syr* Ector of Troye;
And here es the kynredene that I of come,
And Judas and Josue, þise gentille knyghtes: — related also to Judas and Joshua;
I ame apparaunt his ayere, and eldeste of oþer;
Of Alexandere and Aufrike, and alle þa owte landes, — heir of Africa.
I am in possessione, and plenerly sessede.
In alle þe price cetees that to þe porte langes,
I salle hafe trewly the tresour and the londes,
And bothe trebute and taxe whilles my tyme lastes;
I was so hawtayne of herte, whilles I at home lengede, — When at home he was so proud and overbearing,
I helde nane my hippe heghte undire hevene ryche;
ffor-thy was I sente hedire with sevene score knyghttez, — that he was sent by his father to this war with a band of knights.
To asaye of this werre, be sente of my fadire;
And I am for Cyrus witrye schamely supprisede,
And be awtire of armes owtrayede for evere!
Now hafe I taulde the þe kyne that I ofe come,
Wille thow for knyghthede kene me thy name?" — He desires to know Sir Gawaine's name.
"Be Criste," *quod syr* Gawayne, "knyghte wys I never! — Sir Gawaine answers deceitfully that he is only a knave of Arthur's chamber,
With þe kydde conqueror a knafe of his chambyre:
Has wroghte in his wardrope wyntters and ȝeres,
One his longe armour that hym beste lykid;
I poyne alle his pavelyouns þat to hym-selfe pendes,
Dyghttes his dowblettez for dukes and erles,
Aketouns avenaunt for Arthure hym selfene,
That he usede in werre alle this aughte wyntter!
He made me ȝomane at ȝole, and gafe me gret gyftes,

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who had given him a horse and harness as a reward for service.

And c. pound and a horse, and harnayse fulle ryche;
Gife I happe to my hele that hende for to serve,
I be holpene in haste, I hette the for-sothe!"

"If his knaves be such, what can his knights be?" exclaims Sir Priamus.

"Giffe his knafes be syche, his knyghttez are noble!
There es no kynge undire Criste may kempe with hym one!

Alexander and Hector will be nothing to him.

He wille be Alexander ayre, þat alle þe erthe lowttede,
Abillere þane ever was syr Ector of Troye."

"Now fore the krisome þat þou kaghte that day þou was crystenede,

Then Sir Gawaine tells him the truth.

Whethire thowe be knyghte or knaffe, knawe now þe sothe:
My name es syr Gawayne, I graunt þe forsothe,

He is Sir Gawaine, cousin to the Conqueror, the richest knight of all the Round Table.

Cosyne to the conquerour, he knawes it hyme selfene;
Kydd in his kalander a knyghte of his chambyre,
And rollede the richeste of alle þe rounde table!
I ame þe dussepere and duke he dubbede with his hondes,
Deynttely on a daye be-fore his dere knyghtes;
Gruche noghte, gude syr, þofe me this grace happene;
It es þe gifte of Gode, the gree es hys awene!"

Then Sir Priamus says this is better to him than any earthly possessions.

"Petire!" sais Priamus, "now payes me bettire
Thane I of Provynce warre prynce, and of Paresche ryche!
ffore me ware lever prevely be prykkyd to þe harte,
Than ever any prikkere had siche a pryse wonnyne!

In recompense, he warns Gawaine that the Duke of Lorraine with his knights is lying in the wood near.

Bot here es herberde at handes, in ȝone huge holtes,
Halle bataile one heyghe, take hede ȝif the lyke!
The duke of Lorrayne the derfe, with his dere knyghtes,
The doughtyest of Dolfmede, and Duchemene many,
The lordes of Lumbardye that leders are haldene,
The garnysone of Godarde gaylyche arrayede,
The wyese of þe Westvale, wirchipfulle biernez,
Of Sessoyne and Surylande Sarazenes enewe;

A mighty host well armed.

They are nowmerde fulle neghe, and namede in rollez
Sexty thowsande and tene for-sothe of sekyre mene of armez;
Bot ȝif thow hye fro þis hethe, it harmes us bothe,
And bot my hurtes be sone holpene, hole be I never!

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Tak heede to *þis* hausemen*e*, þat he no horn*e* blawe,
Are thowe heyly in haste beese hewen*e* al to peces;
ffor they are my retenuz to ryde whare I wyll*e*,
Es non*e* redyare renkes regnande in erthe;
Be thow raghte w*ith* *þat* rowtt, thow rydes no for*þer*,
Ne thow bees nev*er* rawnsonede for reches in erthe!"
Sir Gawayn*e* wente or *þe* wathe com*e*, whare hym beste lykede,
With this wortheliche wye, that wondyd was sore;
Merkes to *þe* mountayne there oure men*e* lenges,
Baytaynde theire blonkes *þer* on *þe* brode mede;
Lordes lenande lowe on*e* lemand*e* scheldes,
With lowde laghttirs on*e* loft*e* for lykyng*e* of byrdez,
Of larkez, of lynkwhyttez, *þat* lufflyche songen*e*,
And some was sleghte one slepe w*ith* slaughte of *þe* pople,
That sange in *þe* sesun*e* in the schenn*e* schawes,
So lawe in *þe* lawndez so lykand*e* notes.
Thane *syr* Whycher whas warre þaire wardayne was wondyde,
And went to hym wepand, and wryngande his handes;
Sir Wychere, *syr* Walchere, theis weise men*e* of armes,
Had wondyre of *syr* Gawayne, and wente hym*e* agayns:
Mett hym in the mydwaye, and m*er*vaile them*e* toghte
How he maisterede þat man*e*, so myghtty of strenghes!
Be all*e* *þe* welthe of *þe* werlde, so woo was þem*e* nev*er*!
"ffor all*e* our wirchippe i-wysse awaye es in erthe!"
"Greve ȝow noghte," *quod* Gawayne, "for Godis luffe of hevene;
ffore this es bot gosesemere, and gyffen*e* on*e* erles;
þoffe my schouldire be schrede, and my schelde thyrllede,
And the wielde of myn*e* arme werkkes a littill*e*,
This prissonere *syr* Priam*us*, that has per*ilous* wondes,
Sais þat he has salvez sall*e* soften*e* us bothen*e*."
Thane stirttes to his sterape sterynfull*e* knyghttez,
And he lordely lyghttes and laghte of his brydill*e*,
And lete his burlyche blonke baite on *þe* flores;

He bids him beware lest they should discover and destroy him.

Sir Gawaine goes with the wounded knight to Arthur's men.

They are reposing themselves in different ways,

listening to the songs of the birds.

Sir Whycher perceives that Sir Gawaine is wounded,

and wonders how he could have conquered this mighty knight.

Sir Gawaine makes light of his wounds.

His prisoner, Sir Priamus, has salves that will heal them.

They assist him to dismount.

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Braydes of his bacenette and his ryche wedis,
He bends from exhaustion and loss of blood. Bownnes to his brode schelde and bowes to þe erthe,
In alle the bodye of that bolde es no blode leved!
Than preses to syr Priamous precious knyghtes,
Avyssely of his horse hentis hym in armes;
His helme and his hawberke thay takene of aftyre,
Sir Priamus is lifted from his horse. And hastily for his hurtte alle his herte chawngyd;
Thay laide hyme downe in the lawndez, and laghte of his wedes,
And he levede hym one lange, or how hym beste lykede;
They find at his girdle a gold box filled with the flower of Paradise. A ffoyle of fyne golde they fande at his gyrdille,
þat es fulle of þe flour of þe foure welle,
þat flowes owte of Paradice whene þe flode ryses,
That myche froyt of fallez, þat feede schalle us alle;
Be it frette on his flesche, þare synnes are entamede,
The freke schalle be fische halle with-in fowre howres.
With this the knights are healed. They uncovere þat cors with fulle clene hondes;
With clere watire a knyghte clensis theire wondes,
Keled theyme kyndly, and comforthed þer hertes.
And whene þe carffes ware clene, þay clede them a3ayne;
Barelle ferrers they brochede, and broghte theme the wyne,
Then wine and provisions are brought to them. Bothe brede and brawne, and bredis fulle ryche;
Whene þay hade etene anone they armede after.
Thane tha awntrende men as armes askryes,
With a claryoune clere, thire knyghtez to-gedyre,
The scouts bring news of the army encamped in the wood. Callys to concelle, and of this case tellys:—
"3ondyr es a companye of clene mene of armes,
The keneste in contek þat undir Criste lenges;
In 3one okene wode an oste are arrayede,
Undir takande mene of þiese owte londes;
As sais us *syr* Priamous, so helpe seynt Peter!"
Sir Gawaine is for attacking them, "Go, mene, *quod* Gawayne, "and grape in 3oure hertez,
Who salle graythe to 3one greve to 3one gret lordes;
3if we gettlesse goo home, the kyng wille be grevede,
but refers to Sir Florent, the leader of the party. And say we are gadlynges, agaste for a lyttille:
We are with *syr* Florente, as to-daye falles,

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That es floure of ffraunce, for he fleede never;
He was chosene and chargegide in chambire of þe kynge,
Chiftayne of þis journee with chevalrye noble;
Whethire he fyghte or he flee, we salle folowe aftyre,
ffore alle þe fere of ȝone folke forsake salle I never!"
"ffadyre," sais syr Florent, "fulle faire ȝe it telle!
Bot I ame bot a fawntkyne, unfraystede in armes;
ȝif any foly be-falle, þe fawte salle be owrs,
And freindly o Fraunce be flemede for ever!
Woundes noghte ȝour wirchipe, my witte es bot symple;
ȝe are owre wardayne i-wysse, wyrke as ȝowe lykes;
ȝe are at the ferreste noghte passande fyve hundrethe,
And þat es fully to fewe to feghte with theme alle,
ffore harlottez and hausemene salle helpe bott littille;
They wille hye theyme hyene for alle þeire gret wordes!
I rede ȝe wyrke aftyre witte, as wyesse men of armes,
And warpes wylily a-waye, as wirchipfulle knyghtes."
"I grawnte," *quod syr* Gawayne, "so me Gode helpe!
Bot here are galyarde gomes þat of þe gre servis,
The kreuelleste knyghttes of þe kynges chambyre,
That kane carpe with the coppe knyghtly wordes;
We salle prove to daye who salle the prys wyne."
Nowe ferriours fers un-to þe fyrthe rydez,
And foungez a faire felde, and on fotte lyghttez;
Prekes aftyre þe pray, as pryce mene of armes.
ffloremt and Floridas, with fyve score knyghttez,
ffolowede in þe foreste, and on þe way fowndys,
fflyngande a faste trott, and on þe folke dryffes.
Than felewes fast to our folke wele a fyve hundreth
Of freke mene to þe fyrthe, appone fresche horses;
One syr Feraunt be-fore, apone a fayre stede,
(Was fosterde in Famacoste, the fende was his fadyre)
He flenges to syr Florent, and prystly he kryes,—
"Why flees thow, falls knyghte? þe fende hafe þi saule!"
Thane syr ffiorent was fayne, and in fewter castys;
One fawnelle of ffryselande to fferaunt he rydys,

Sir Florent expresses his deference to Sir Gawaine, the warden of the knights of the Round Table,

and thinks their numbers are too few to fight.

He is for a careful retreat.

Sir Gawaine speaks with a sneer of those who only fight with words.

Arthur's men advance to the wood.

A band of 500 of the enemy meet them, headed by Sir Feraunt.

He calls scornfully on Sir Florent,

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And raghte in þe reyne on þe stede ryche,
And rydes to-warde the rowte, restes he no lengere!
ffulle butt in þe frounte he flysches hyme evene,
And alle dysfegoures his face with his felle wapene!
Thurghe his bryghte bacenette his brayne has he towchede,
And brustene his neke-bone, þat all his breste stoppede!
Thane his cosyne askryede, and cryede fulle lowde,
"Thowe has killede colde dede þe kynge of alle knyghttes!
He has bene fraistede on felde in fyftene rewmes;
He fonde never no freke myghte foghte with hym one!
Thow schalle dye for his dede with my derfe wapene,
And all þe doughtty for dule þat in ȝone dale hoves!"
"ffy," sais syr fforidas, "thow ffleryande wryche!
Thow wenes for to flay us, ffloke-mowthede schrewe!"
Bot ffloridas with a swerde, as he by glenttys,
Alle þe flesche of þe flanke he flappes in sondyre,
That alle the filthe of þe freke and fele of þe guttes
ffoloes his fole fotte, whene he furthe rydes!
Than rydes a renke to reschewe þat byerne,
That was Raynalde of þe rodes, and rebelle to Criste,
Pervertede with Paynyms þat Cristene persewes;
Presses in prowdly, as þe praye wendes,
ffore he hade in Prewsslande myche pryce wonnene;
ffor-thi in presence thare he profers so large!
Bot thane a renke syr Richere of þe rounde table,
One a ryalle stede rydes hym aȝaynes;
Throwe a rownnde rede schelde he ruschede hym sone,
That the rosselde spere to his herte rynnes!
The renye relys abowte and rusches to þe erthe,
Roris fulle ruydlye, bot rade he no more!
Now alle þat es fere and unfaye of þes fyve hundreth
ffalles on syr fflorent, a ffyve score knyghttes;
Be-twyx a plasche and a flode, appone a flate lawnde,
Oure folke fongene theire felde, and fawghte theme agaynes.
Than was lowde appone lofte Lorrayne askryede,

who with his lance in rest pierces him through the face and brain.

His cousin vows vengeance for his death,

but Sir Floridas quickly disposes of him.

Sir Raynald, the renegade, proudly presses in;

but Sir Richer, of the Round Table, pierces him with a spear.

Sir Florent and his five score knights are sorely pressed.

The one side shout "Lo-

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Whene ledys with longe speris lasschene to-gedyrs,
And Arthure one oure syde, whene theyme oghte aylede.
Than *syr* fflorent and Floridas in fewtyre þey caste,
ffruschene one alle þe ffrape, and biernes affrayede;
ffellis fyve at þe frounte thare they fyrste enteride,
And, or they ferke forthire, fele of þese o*þer*e!
Brenyes browddene they briste, brittenede scheldes,
Bettes and beres downe the best *þat* þeme byddes;
Alle þat rewlyde in the rowte they rydene awaye,
So rewdly they rere theys ryalle knyghttes!
When *syr* Pr*i*amo*us* þat pr*i*nce p*er*sayvede theire gamene,
He hade pet*é* in herte þat he ne durst pr*o*fire;
He wente to *syr* Gawayne, and sais hym þese wordes,—
"Thi price mene fore thi praye putt are alle undyre,
They are w*i*th Sarazenes ov*er*-sette mo þane sevene hundreth
Of þe Sowdanes knyghtes owt of sere londes;
Walde þow suffire me, *syr*, for sake of thi Criste,
With a soppe of thi mene suppowelle theym ones."
"I grouche not," *quod* Gawayne, "þe gree es þaire awene!
They mone hafe gwerddouns fulle grett graunt of my lorde!
Bot the freke mene of Fraunce fraiste theme selfene,
ffrekes faughte noghte þeire fille this fyftene wynt*ter*!
I wille noghte stire w*i*th my stale half a stede lenghe,
Bot they be stedde w*i*th more stuffe thane one ȝone stede hovys."
Thane *syr* Gawayne was warre with-owttyne þe wode hemmes,
Wyes of þe Westfale appone wyght horsez,
Walopande wodely, as þe waye forthes,
With alle þe wapyns i-wys that to þe werre longez;
The erle Antele the olde the avawmwarde he buskes,
Ayerande one ayther hande heghte thosande knyghtez;
He pelours and pavysers passede alle nombyre,
That ev*er* any prynce lede purvayede in erthe!

raine," the other "Arthur."

Sir Florent and Sir Floridas perform great deeds of valour.

Sir Priamus beseeches Gawaine that he may help Arthur's knights against the Saracens.

Sir Gawaine declares that they have only just enough to do to please them.

He sees the main body of the enemy approaching,

headed by the Earl Antele, who leads 8,000 knights.

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Than þe duke of Lorrayne dresesse thare aftyre,
With dowbille of þe Duche-mene, þat doughtty ware holdene;
Paynymes of Pruyslande, prekkers fulle noble,
Come prekkande be-fore with Priamous knyghttez.
The Earl is indignant that Arthur's knights should venture to resist so great a host.
Than saide the erle Antele to Algere his broþer,—
"Me angers ernestly at Arthures knyghtez!
Thus enkerly one an oste awnters þeme selfene;
They wille be owttrayede anone, are undrone rynge,
Thus folily one a felde to fyghte with us alle!
Bot thay be fesede in faye, ferly me thynkes!
Walde they purposse take, and passe one theire wayes,
They had better retreat while they are able.
Prike home to theire prynce, and their pray leve,
They myghte lenghene theire lyefe, and lossene bott littille!
It wolde lyghte my herte, so helpe me oure Lorde!"
Sir Alger, his brother, says that though they are so few they are a match for an army.
"Sir," sais syr Algere, "thay hafe littille usede
To be owttrayede withe oste; me angers þe more!
The fayreste schalle be fulle feye, þat in oure floke ryddez,
Alls fewe as they bene, are they the felde leve!"
Thane gud Gawayne, gracious and noble,
Sir Gawaine rejoices at having some work to do, and encourages his knights.
Alle with glorious gle he gladdis his knyghtes;
"Gloppyns noghte, gud mene, for gleterand scheldes,
ȝofe ȝone gadlyngez be gaye one ȝone gret horses!
Banerettez of Bretayne, buskes up ȝour hertes!
Bees noghte baiste of ȝone boyes, ne of þaire bryghte wedis!
We salle blenke theire boste for alle theire bolde profire!
Als bouxome as birde es in bede to hir lorde,
ȝeffe we feghte to daye, þe felde schalle be owrs!
The fekille faye salle faile, and fallssede be distroyede!
ȝone folk is one ffrountere, unfraistede theyme semes;
Thay make faythe and faye to þe fend selvene!
We salle in this viage victoures be holdene,
And avauntede with voycez of valyant biernez;
Great shall be the rewards and joys of victory.
Praysede with pryncez in presence of lordes,
And luffede with ladyes in dyverse londes!
Aughte never siche honoure none of oure elders,

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Unwyne ne Absolone, ne none of theis oþer!
Whene we are moste in destresse, Marie we mene,[1]
That es oure maisters seyne, þat he myche traistez; — Let them put their trust in Mary.
Melys of þat mylde qwene, that menskes us alle;
Who so meles of þat mayde, myskaries he never!"
Be þese wordes ware saide, they ware noghte ferre behynde — The enemy come upon them.
Bot the lenghe of a launde, and Lorayne askryes;
Was never siche a justynge at journe in erthe,
In the vale of Josephate, as gestes us telles, — Never was there such a jousting. Even that in the valley of Jehosaphat was not equal to it.
Whene Julyus *and* Joatalle ware juggede to dy,
As was whene þe ryche mene of þe rownde table
Ruschede in-to þe rowte one ryalle stedes!
ffor so rathely þay rusche with roselde speris,
That the raskaille was rade, and rane to þe grefes, — The rascal rout run, but the rich men of the Round Table fight valiantly.
And karede to þat courte as cowardes for ever!
"Peter!" sais syr Gawayne, "this gladdez myne herte! — Gawaine rejoices at the flight of the rabble.
That ȝone gedlynges are gone, that made gret nowmbre!
I hope that thees harlottez salle harme us bot littille,
ffore they wille hyde theme in haste with-in ȝone holte enis!
Thay are feware one felde þan þay were fyrste nombirde,
Be fourrty thousand in faythe, for alle theyre faire hostes."
Bot one Jolyan of Jene, a geante fulle howge, — A huge giant is slain by a Justice of Wales.
Has jonede one *syr* Jerant a justis of Walis;
Thorowe a jerownde schelde he jogges hym thorowe,
And a fyne gesserawnte of gentille mayles!
Joynter and gemows he jogges in sondyre!
One a jambe stede þis jurnee he makes;
Thus es þe geante for-juste, that errawnte Jewe,
And Gerarde es jocunde, and joyes hym þe more!
Than the genatours of Genne enjoynes att ones,
And frykis one þe frowntere welle a fyve hundreth; — Sir Frederick attacks the British forayers.
A freke highte *syr* ffederike, with fulle fele oþer,
fferkes one a frusche, and fresclyche askryes
To fyghte with oure fforreours, þat one felde hovis;

[1] *nenene* erased, and *mene* written in margin.

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And thane the ryalle renkkes of þe rownde table
The knights of the Round Table advance and fight valiantly.
Rade furthe fulle ernestly, and rydis theme agaynes,
Mellis with the medille warde, bot they ware ille machede;
Of siche a grett multytude was mervayle to here.
Seyne at þe assemble the Sarazenes discoveres
The soveraynge of Sessoyne, that salvede was never;
Gyawntis for-justede with gentille knyghtes,
Thorowe gesserawntes of Jene jaggede to þe herte!
They hewe thorowe helmes hawtayne biernez,
Þat þe hiltede swerdes to þaire hertes rynnys!
Than þe renkes renownde of the rownd table
Ryffes and ruysseches downe renayede wreches;
And thus they drevene to þe dede dukes and erles,
Alle þe dreghe of þe daye, with dredfulle werkes!
Sir Priamus and his followers desert to the side of Arthur's men.
Thane syr Priamous þe prynce, in presens of lordes,
Presez to his penowne, and pertly it hentes;
Revertede it redily, and a-waye rydys
To þe ryalle rowte of þe rownde table;
And heyly his retenuz raykes hym aftyre,
ffor they his resone had rede on his schelde ryche.
Owte of þe scheltrone þey schede, as schepe of a folde,
And steris furth to þe stowre, and stode be þeire lorde!
Seyne they sent to þe duke, and saide hym þise wordes,—
They upbraid the Duke of Lorraine for not having paid them their wages.
"We hafe bene thy sowdeours this sex ȝere and more;
We forsake þe to daye be serte of owre lorde!
We sewe to oure soveraynge in sere kynges londes;
Us defawtes oure feez of þis foure wyntteres;
Thow art feble and false, and noghte bot faire wordes;
Oure wages are werede owte, and þi werre endide,
We maye with oure wirchipe weend whethire us lykes!
I red þowe trette of a trewe, and trofle no lengere,
Or þow salle tyne of thi tale ten thosande or evene."
The Duke answers furiously.
"ffy a debles!" saide þe duke, "the develle have ȝour bones!
The dawngere of ȝon dogges drede schalle I never!
We salle dele this daye, be dedes of armes,
My dede and my ducherye, and my dere knyghtes!

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Siche sowdeo*ur*s as ȝe I sett bot att lyttill*e*,
That sodanly in defawte for-sakes theire lorde!"
The duke in his schelde and dreches no lengere,
Drawes him a dromedarie, with dredfull*e* knyghtez; — He charges Arthur's knights on a dromedary.
Graythes to *syr* Gawayne with full*e* gret nowmbyre
Of gomes of Gernaide, that grevous are holden*e*;
Thas fresche horsesede men*e* to *þe* frownt rydes,
ffelles of oure fforreo*ur*s be fourtty at ones! — Makes a great slaughter of the forayers.
They hade foughttene before with a fyve hundrethe;
It was no ferly in faythe, *þ*ofe they faynt waxene.
Thane *syr* Gawayne was grefede, and grypys his spere, — Sir Gawaine grasps his spear.
And gyrdez in agayne with galyarde knyghttez;
Metes *þe* maches of mees and melles hym thorowe,
As man of *þis* medill*e* erthe, *þ*at moste hade grevede:
Bot on Chastelayne, a chylde of *þe* kynges chambyre, — Child-Chatelaine slays Sir Childred,
Was warde to *syr* Wawayne of *þe* weste marches,
Cheses to *syr* Cheldride, a cheftayne noble,
With a chasy*n*g spere he chokkes hym thurghe!
This chekke hym*e* eschewede be chauncez of armes;
So *þ*ay chase *þat* childe, eschape may he nev*er*!
Bot on*e* Swyan*e* of Swecy, w*i*th a swerde egge,
The swyers swyre-bane he swappes in sondyre!
He swounande diede, *and* on *þe* swarthe lengede, — and is slain by Swyan.
Sweltes ewyn*n*e swiftly, and swanke he no more!
Than *syr* Gawayne gretes with his gray eghne;
The guyte was a gude man*e*, begyn*n*ande of armes:
ffore the charry childe so his chere chawngide,
That the chillande watire on*e* his chekes rynnyde!
"Woo es me," *quod* Gawayne, "that I ne weten*e* hade; — Gawaine grieves for the Child.
I sall*e* wage for that wye all*e* *þ*at I welde,
Bot I be wroken*e* on that wye, that thus has hym wondyde!"
He dresses hym drerily, and to *þe* duke rydes,
Bot one *syr* Dolphyne the derfe dyghte hym agaynes, — He slays one Sir Dolphin.
And *syr* Gawayne hym gyrd with a grym launce,
That the groundene spere glade to his herte!

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And egerly he hente owte, and hurte anoþer,
Then Hardolf, happy in arms, An haythene knyght, Hardolfe, happye in armes;
Sleyghly in at the slotte slyttes hyme thorowe,
That the slydande spere of his hande sleppes!
Thare es slayne in þat slope, be elagere of his hondes,
and sixty more. Sexty slongene in a slade of sleghe men of armes!
Þofe *syr* Gawaynne ware wo, he wayttes hym by,
And was warre of þat wye that the childe wondyde,
He avenges the Child, And with a swerde swiftly he swappes him thorowe,
That he swyftly swelte, and on þe erthe swounes!
And thane he raykes to þe rowte, and ruysches one helmys;
and cuts his way through the enemy. Riche hawberkes he rente, and rasede schyldes;
Rydes one a rawndoune, and his rayke holdes;
Thorow owte þe rerewarde he holdes wayes,
And thare raughte in the reyne this ryalle þe ryche,
And rydez in-to the rowte of þe rownde table.
The great deeds of Arthur's chivalrous men secure the victory. Thane oure chevalrous men changene theire horsez,
Chases and choppes downe cheftaynes noble!
Hittes fulle hertely on helmes and scheldes,
Hurtes and hewes downe haythene knyghtez!
Ketelle hattes they cleve evene to þe scholdirs!
Was never siche a clamour of capitaynes in erthe!
Thare was kynges sonnes kaughte, curtays and noble,
And knyghtes of þe contre, that knawene was ryche;
Lordes of Lorayne and Lumbardye bothene.
Laughe was and lede in with our lele knyghttez;
Thas þat chasede that daye, their chaunce was bettire,
Swiche a cheke at a chace eschevede theyme never!
Sir Florent presses on with five score knights. When syr fflorent be fyghte had þe felde wonene,
He fferkes ine before with fyve score knyghttez;
Theire prayes and theire presoneres passes one aftyre,
With pylours, and pavysers, and pryse mene of armes.
Sir Gawaine follows with caution, Thane gudly *syr* Gawayne gydes his knyghttez,
Gas in at þe gayneste, as gydes hym telles,
ffore greffe of a garysone of fulle gret lordes
Sulde noghte gripe upe his gere, ne swyche grame wurche:

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ffore-thy they stode at the straytez, and with his stale hovede,
Tille his prayes ware paste the pathe that he dredis;
Whene they the cete myghte see that the kyng seggede, — and sees the city which Arthur was besieging won on the same day;
Sothely the same daye was wit asawte wonnene,
An hawrawde hyes before, the beste of the lordes,
Hom at þe herbergage, owt of tha hyghe londes;
Tornys tytte to þe tente, and to the kynge telles
Alle the tale sothely, and how they hade syede;—
"Alle thy forreours are fere, that forrayede with-owttyne, — for Arthur had been told of the victory of his knights by an herald,
Sir fflorent, and syr ffloridas, and alle thy ferse knyghtez:
Thay hafe forrayede and foghtene with fulle gret nowmbyre,
And fele of thy foo-mene has broghte owt of lyffe!
Oure wirchipfulle wardayne es wele eschevyde,
ffor he has wonne to-daye wirchipp for evere! — and how Sir Gawaine had won mighty honour.
He has Dolfyne slayne, and þe duke takyne!
Many dowghty es dede by dynt of his hondes!
He has presoners price, pryncez and erles,
Of þe richeste blode þat regnys in erthe!
Alle thy chevallrous mene faire are eschewede,
Bot a childe Chasteleynne myschance es befallene."
"Hawtayne," sais þe king, "harawde be Criste! — Then he rejoiced and gave a hundred pounds largess,
Thow has helyd myne herte, I hete the for-sothe!
I ȝife the in Hamptone a hundreth pownde large."
The kynge þan to assawte he sembles his knyghtez, — and, assembling his knights, assaults the city.
With somercastelle and sowe appone sere halfes;
Skystis his skotiferis,, and skayles the wallis,
And iche wache has his warde with wiese mene of armes.
Thane boldly þay buske, and bendes engynes,
Payses in pylotes and proves theire castes;
Mynsteris and masondewes they malle to þe erthe,
Chirches and chapelles chalke whitte blawnchede.
Stone tepelles fulle styffe in þe strete ligges, — They carry all before them.
Chawmbyrs with chymnes, and many cheefe inns;
Paysede and pelid downe playsterede walles;

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The pyne of þe pople was pete for to here!
Thane þe duchez hire dyghte with damesels ryche,
The cowntas of Crasyne with hir clere madyns,
Knelis downe in the kyrnelles thare the kyng hovede,
On a coverede horse comlyli arayede;
They knewe hym by contenaunce, and criede fulle lowde,—
The ladies sue for mercy. "Kyng crownede of kynde, take kepe to þese wordes!
We be-seke ȝow, *syr*, as soveraynge and lorde,
That ȝe safe us to daye, for sake of ȝoure Criste!
Sende us some socoure, and saughte with the pople,
Or þe cete be sodaynly with assawte wonnene!"
He weres his vesere with a vowt noble,
With vesage verteuous, this valyant bierne;
Moles to hir mildly with fulle meke wordes,—
Arthur promises that no hurt shall befall them. "Salle no mysse do ȝow, ma-dame, þat to me lenges;
I gyf ȝow chartire of pes, *and* ȝoure cheefe maydens,
The childire and þe chaste mene, the chevalrous knyghtez;
The duke es in dawngere, dredis it bott lyttylle!
He salle I dene þe fulle wele, dout ȝow noghte elles."
Thane sent he one iche a syde to certayne lordez,
The city is surrendered. ffor to leve þe assawte, the cete was ȝoldene;
With þe erle eldeste sone he sent hym þe kayes,
And seside þe same dyghte, be sent of þe lordes:
The Duke is sent to Dover as a prisoner. The duke to Dovere es nyghte, and alle his dere knyghtez,
To duelle in dawngere and dole þe dayes of hys lyve,
Many of the inhabitants escape. Thare fleede at the ferrere ȝate folke withowttyne nombyre,
ffor ferde of *syr* fflorent and his fers knyghtez;
Voydes the cete and to the wode rynnys,
With vetaile, and vesselle, and vestoure so ryche:
Thay buske upe a banere abowne þe brode ȝates
Of *syr* fflorent in ffay, so fayne was he never!
The knights see the sign of the capture of the city. The knyghte hovys on a hylle, beholde to þe wallys,
And saide, "I see be ȝone syngne the cete es oures!"
Sir Arthure enters anone with hostes arayede,
Arthur preserves strict discipline. Evene at þe undrone etles to lenge;

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In iche lev*e*re on lowde the kynge did crye,
Of payne of lyf and lym and lesynge of londes,
That no lele ligemane that to hym lon*n*gede
Sulde lye be no ladysse, ne be no lele maydyns,
Ne be no burgesse wyffe, better ne werse;
Ne no biernez myse-bide, that to *þe* burghe longede.

Arthur provides for the government of Lorraine which he had conquered.

When*e* *þe* kyng Arthure hade lely conquerid,
And the castell*e* cov*e*rede of *þe* kythe riche,
All*e* *þe* crowell*e* and kene, be craftes of armes,
Captayns and constables, knewe hym for lorde.
He devysede and delte to dyv*e*rse lordez,
A dowere for *þe* duchez and hir dere childire;
Wroghte wardaynes by wytte to welde all*e* *þe* londez,
That he had wonnen*e* of werre, thorowe his weise knyghtez.
Thus in Lorayne he lenges as lord in his awen*e*,
Settez lawes in the lande, as hym leefe toghte;

At Lammas he goes to Lucerne.

And one *þe* Lammese daye to Lucerne he wendez,
Lengez thare at laysere with lykyng*e* i-nowe;
Thare his galays ware graythede, a full*e* gret nombyre,

His fair galleys are assembled.

Alle glet*e*rand as glase, undire grene hyllys,
With cabanes cov*e*rede for kynges anoyntede,
With clothes of clere golde for knyghtez and o*þe*r;
Sone stowede theire stuffe, and stablede *þ*eire horses,

He leads his forces over the high mountains by marvellous ways;

Strekes streke ov*e*r *þe* strem in-to *þe* strayte londez.
Now he moves his myghte w*i*th myrthes of herte,
Overe mowntes so hye, *þ*ase m*e*rvailo*us* wayes;

passes the St. Gothard after defeating the garrison;

Gosse in by Goddarde, the garett be wynnys,
Graythes the garnison*e* grisely wondes!
Whene he was passede the heghte, than the kyng hovys
With his hol*þ* bataylle, be-haldande abowte,

looks down on Lombardy, and advances to Como.

Lukand*e* one Lumbarddye, and one lowde melys,—
"In *ȝ*one lykand*e* londe, lorde be I thynke."
Thane they cayre to Combe, with kyngez anoyntede,
That was kyde of *þe* coste, kay of all*e* o*þe*r:

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Sir ffloreut and *syr* ffloridas þan fowndes before,
With ffreke mene of ffraunce welle a fyve hundreth;
To þe cete unsene thay soghte at þe gayneste,
Sir Florent plants an ambush, 3116 And sett an embuschement, als þeme-selfe lykys;
Thane ischewis owt of *þat* cete fulle sone be þe morne,
Slale discoverours, skyftes theire horses;
Than skyftes þes skoverours, and skippes one hyllis,
3120 Discoveres for skulkers that they no skathe lymppene;
Poveralle and pastorelles passede one aftyre,
With porkes to pasture at the price ȝates;
Boyes in þe subarbis bourdene ffulle heghe,
3124 At a bare synglere that to þe bente rynnys.
Thane brekes oure buschement, and the brigge wynnes,
and captures the city. Brayedez in-to þe burghe *with* baners displayede,
Stekes and stablis thorowe that them aȝayne-stondes;
3128 ffowre stretis, or þay stynte, they stroyene fore evere!
The city Combe is won. Now es the conquerour in Combe, and his courte holdes
With-in the kyde castelle, with kynges enoynttede;
Be consaillez the commons þat to þe kyth lengez,
3132 Comfourthes þe carefulle with knyghtly wordez;
Made a captayne kene a knyghte of hys awene,
Bot alle the contré and he fulle sone ware accordide.
The Lord of Milan sends to offer submission and tribute. The syre of Melane herde saye þe cete was wonnene,
3136 And send to Arthure sertayne lordes,
Grete sommes of golde, sexti horse chargegid,
Be-soghte hyme as soverayne to socoure þe pople,
And saide he wolde sothely be sugette for ever,
3140 And make hyme servece and suytte for his sere londes;
ffor plesaunce of Pawnce, and of Pownte Tremble,
ffor Pyse, and for Pavy, he profers fulle large,
Bothe purpur, and palle, and precious stonys,
3144 Palfrayes for any prynce, and provedę stedes;
And ilke a ȝere for Melane a melione of golde,
Mekely at Martynmesse to menske *with* his hordes;
And ever withowttyne askynge he and his ayers
3148 Be homagers to Arthure, whilles his lyffe lastis.

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The kynge be his concelle a condethe hym sendis, — He pays homage to Arthur at Como.
And he es comene to Combe, and knewe hym as lorde.
Into Tuskané he tournez, whene þus wele tymede, — Arthur enters Tuscany,
Takes townnes fulle tyte with towrres fulle heghe;
Walles he welte downe, wondyd knyghtez,
Towrres he turnes, and turmentez þe pople!
Wroghte wedewes fulle wlonke, wrotherayle synges,
Ofte wery and wepe, and wryngene theire handis;
And alle he wastys with werre, thare he awaye rydez; — and ravages the country.
Thaire welthes and theire wonnyges, wandrethe he wroghte!
Thus they spryngene and sprede, and sparis bot lyttille,
Spoylles dispetouslye, and spillis theire vynes;
Spendis un-sparely, þat sparede was lange,
Spedis theme to Spolett with speris inewe!
ffro Spayne in-to Spruyslande the worde of hyme sprynges,
And spekynnges of his spencis, disspite es fulle hugge!
Towarde Viterbe this valyant avires the reynes;
Avissely in þat vale he vetailles his biernez, — He pitches his camp in the Vale of Viterbo.
With vernage, and oþer wyne, and venysone bakene;
And one the vicounte londes he visez to lenge.
Vertely the avawmwarde voydez theire horsez;
In the Vertennone vale, the vines imangez,
Thare suggeournes this souerayne, with solace in herte,
To see whene the senatours sent any wordes;
Revelle with riche wyne, riotes hym selfene,
This roy with his ryalle mene of þe rownde table, — The king and his knights make great merriment.
With myrthis, and melodye, and many kyne gamnes;
Was never meriere men made one this erthe!
Bot one a Saterdaye at none, a sevenyghte thare aftyre,
The konyngeste cardynalle that to the courte lengede — The cunningest Cardinal of Rome is sent to him,
Knelis to þe conquerour, and karpes thire wordes,—
Prayes hym for þe pes, and profyrs fulle large,
To hafe pete of þe Pope, þat put was at-undere;
Be-soghte hym of surrawns, for sake of oure Lorde,

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Bot a sevenyghte daye to þay ware alle semblede,

and offers that the Pope shall crown him as Sovereign in Rome.

And they schulde sekerlye hym see the Sonondaye þeraftyre,
In the cete of Rome, as soveraynge and lorde;
And crowne hym kyndly with krysomede hondes,
With his ceptre, as soveraynge and lorde:

Hostages are given for the truth of his words.

Of this undyrtakynge ostage are comyne,
Of ayers fulle avenaunt awughte score childrenne,
In toges of tarsse fulle richelye attyrde,
And betuke theme the kynge, and his clere knyghttes.
When they had tretide thiere trewe, with trowmpynge þerafter
They tryne unto a tente, whare tables whare raysede;

The Roman Senators are solemnly feasted.

The kynge hyme selfene es sette, and certayne lordes,
Undyre a sylure of sylke sawghte at the burdez:
Alle the senatours are sette sere be þame one,
Serfed solemply with selcouthe metes:
The kynge myghty of myrthe, with his milde wordes,
Rehetez the Romaynez at his riche table,
Comforthes the cardynalle so kynghtly hyme selvene;
And this roye ryalle, as romawns us tellis,
Reverence the Romayns in his riche table;
The tawghte mene and þe conynge, whene theme tyme thoghte,
Tas theire lefe at þe kynge, and tornede agayne;
To þe cete þat nyghte thaye soughte at þe gayneste,
And thus the ostage of Rome with Arthure es levede.

Arthur glorifies himself for his great success.

Than this roy royalle rehersys theis wordes,—
"Now may we revelle and riste, fore Rome es oure awene!
Make oure ostage at ese, þise avenaunt childyrene,
And luk ȝe hondene theme alle that in myne oste lengez;
The emperour of Almayne, and alle theis este marches,
We salle be overlynge of alle þat one the erthe lengez!
We wille by þe crosse dayes encroche þeis loydez,

He will be crowned at Christmas

And at þe Crystynmesse daye be crownned ther-aftyre;

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Ryngne in my ryalltes, and holde my rownde table,
Withe the rentes of Rome, as me beste lykes:
Syne graythe over þe grette see with gud mene of armes,
To revenge the renke that one the rode dyede!"
Thane this comlyche knyge, as cronycles tellys,
Bownnys brathely to bede with a blythe herte;
Of he slynges with sleghte, and slakes gyrdille,
And fore slewthe of slomowre one a slepe fallis.
Bot be ane aftyre mydnyghte alle his mode changede;
He mett in the morne while fulle mervaylous dremes!
And whene his dredefulle drem whas drefene to þe ende,
The kynge dares for dowte dye as he scholde;
Sendes aftyre phylosophers, and his affraye telles,—
"Sene I was formede in fayth, so ferde whas I never!
ffor-thy rawnsakes redyly, and rede me my swefennys,
And I salle redily and ryghte rehersene the sothe:
Me-thoughte I was in a wode willed myne one,
That I ne wiste no waye whedire þat I scholde,
ffore wolvez, and whilde swynne, and wykkyde bestez,
Walkede in that wasternne, wathes to seche;
Thare lyouns fulle lothely lykkyde þeire tuskes,
Alle fore lapynge of blude of my lele knyghtez!
Thurghe þat foreste I flede, thare floures whare heghe,
ffor to fele me for ferde of tha foule thyngez;
Merkede to a medowe with montayngnes enclosyde,
The meryeste of medill-erthe that mene myghte be-holde!
The close was in compas castyne alle abowte,
With claver and clereworte clede evene over;
The vale was evene rownde with vynes of silver,
Alle with grapis of golde, gretter ware never!
Enhorilde with arborye and alkyns trees,
Erberis fulle honeste, and byrdez þere undyre;
Alle froytez foddenid was þat floreschede in erthe,
ffaire frithed in frawnke appone tha free bowes;
Whas thare no downkynge of dewe that oghte dere scholde,

in Rome, and hold his Round Table there.

He goes to bed and dreams.

He sends for his philosophers, and tells them the dream.

He was in a wood among wild beasts,

which were licking from their teeth the blood of his knights.

He flies to a beautiful meadow enclosed with mountains, and having vines of silver and grapes of gold.

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With þe drowghte of þe daye alle drye ware þe flores!
A beautiful duchess descends from the clouds,
Than discendis in the dale, downe fra þe clowddez,
A duches dere-worthily dyghte in dyaperde wedis,
In a surcott of sylke fulle selkouthely hewede,
Alle with loyotour overlaide lowe to þe hemmes,
dressed in gorgeous apparel,
And with ladily lappes the lenghe of a ȝerde,
And alle redily reversside with rebanes of golde,
Bruchez and besauntez, and oþer bryghte stonys,
With hir bake and hir breste was brochede alle over,
With kelle and with corenalle clenliche arrayede,
And þat so comly of colour one knowene was never!
who whirled a strange wheel with her hands,
A-bowte cho whirllide a whele with hir whitte hondez,
Over-whelme alle qwayntely þe whele as cho scholde;
The rowelle whas rede golde with ryalle stonys,
Raylide with reched and rubyes inewe;
The spekes was splentide alle with speltis of silver,
The space of a spere lenghe springande fulle faire;
upon which was a chair made of silver, and ornamented with carbuncles.
There one was a chayere of chalke-whytte silver,
And chekyrde with charebocle chawngynge of hewes;
Six kings, clinging to the wheel, strive to reach the chair, but they all fall to the ground.
Appone þe compas ther clewide kyngis one rawe,
With corowns of clere golde þat krakede in sondire:
Sex was of þat setille fulle sodaynliche fallene,
Each one of them speaks separately, and laments his life past and gone, which had been spent in riot and wickedness,
Ilke a segge by hyme selfe, and saide theis wordez,—
'That ever I regnede one þir rog, me rewes it ever!
Was never roye so riche that regnede in erthe!
Whene I rode in my rowte, roughte I noghte elles,
Bot revaye, and revelle, and rawnsone the pople!
And thus I drife forthe my dayes, whilles I dreghe myghte,
therefore he is damned for ever.
And there-fore derflyche I am dampnede for ever!'
The laste was a litylle mane that laide was be-nethe,
His leskes laye alle lene and latheliche to schewe,
The first was a little man with eyes brighter than silver.
The lokkes lyarde and longe the lenghe of a ȝerde,
His lire and his lyghame lamede fulle sore;
þe two eyne of the byeryne was brighttere þane silver,
The toþer was ȝalowere thene the ȝolke of a naye,—

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'I was lorde,' *quod* the lede, 'of londes i-newe,
And alle ledis me lowttede that lengede in erthe;
And nowe es lefte me no lappe my lygham to hele,
Bot lightly now am I loste, leve iche mane the sothe!'
The secunde *syr* forsothe þat sewede theme aftyre,
Was sekerare to my sighte, and saddare in armes;
Ofte he syghede unsownde, and said theis wordes,—
'On ȝone see hafe I sittene, as sovȩrayne and lorde,
And ladys me lovede to lappe in theyre armes;
And nowe my lordchippes are loste, and laide for ever!'
The thirde thorowely was throo, and thikke in the schuldyrs,
A thra man to threttе of, there thretty ware gaderide;
His dyademe was droppede downe, dubbyde with stonys,
Endente alle with diamawndis, and dighte for þe nonis;
'I was dredde in my dayes,' he said, 'in dyverse rewmes,
And now dampnede to þe dede, and dole es the more!'
The fourte was a faire mane, and forsesy in armes,
Þe fayreste of fegure that fourmede was ever!
'I was frekke in my faithe,' he said, 'whilles I one fowlde regnede,
ffamows in fferre londis, and floure of alle kynges;
Now es my face defadide, and foule es me hapnede,
ffor I am fallene fro ferre, and frendles by-levyde!'
The fifte was a faire mane þane fele of thies oþer,
A fforsey mane and a ferse, with fomand lippis;
He fongede faste one þe feleyghes, and fayled his armes,
Bot ȝit he failede and felle a fyfty fote large;
Bot ȝit he sprange and sprente, and spraddene his armes,
And one þe spere lenghe spekes, he spekes þire wordes—
'I was in Surrye a syr, and sett be myne one,
As sovȩrayne and seyngnour of sere kynges londis;
Now of my solace I am fulle sodanly fallene,
And forsake of my syne, ȝone cete es me rewede!'
The sexte hade a sawtere semliche bowndene,
With a surepel of silke sewede fulle faire,

He had been lord of many lands, but now was lost.

The second had been sovereign of the sea, and loved of ladies.

The third was stout and strong.

He had been mightily feared in his day.

The fourth was very fair, but foul mischance had now happened to him.

The fifth was very fierce and violent

He had been sovereign in Syria, but was now fallen.

The sixth had a psalter well-bound, a harp and a sling.

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A harpe and a hande-slynge with harde flynte stones;
What harmes he has hente he halowes fulle sone,—
'I was demede in my dayes,' he said, 'of dedis of armes
One of the doughtyeste that duellede in erthe;
Bot I was merride one molde in my moste strenghethis,
With this maydene so mylde, þat mofes us alle.'
Two kynges ware clymbande, and claverande one heghe,
The creste of þe compas they covette fulle ȝerne;
'This chaire of charbokle,' they said, 'we chalange here aftyre,
As two of þe cheffeste chosene in erthe!'
The childire ware chalke-whitte, chekys and oþer,
Bot the chayere abowne chevede they never:
The forthirmaste was freely with a frount large,
The faireste of fyssnanny þat fourmede was ever;
And he was buskede in a blee of a blewe noble,
With flourdelice of golde floreschede al over;
The toþer was cledde in a cote alle of clene silver,
With a comliche crosse corvene of golde,
ffowre crosselettes krafty by þe crosse riftes,
And ther-by knewe I the kynge, þat crystnede hyme semyde.

He had been held the doughtiest in his day, but had been marred by the maiden.

Two kings are seen who challenge the chair hereafter, but fail to reach it.

The one was passing fair of feature, with a mighty forehead.

The other bore the cross as an ornament in token that he was a Christian.

Thane I went to þat wlonke, and wynly hire gretis,
And cho said, 'welcome i-wis! wele arte thow fowndene;
The aughte to wirchipe my wille, and thow wele cowthe,
Of alle the valyant men that ever was in erthe;
ffore alle thy wirchipe in werre by me has thow wonnene,
I hafe bene frendely freke, and fremmede tille oþer;
That has þow fowndene in faithe, and fele of þi biernez,
ffore I fellid downe syr Frolle with frowarde knyghtes;
ffore-thi the fruytes of Fraunce are freely thynne awene.
Thow salle þe chayere escheve, I chese þe my-selfene,
Be-fore alle þe cheftaynes chosene in this erthe.'
Scho lifte me up lightly with hir lene hondes,
And sette me softely in the see, þe septre me rechede;

Arthur accosts the Duchess, who welcomes him.

He is chosen to achieve the chair,

and sit therein.

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Craftely with a kambe cho kembede myne hevede,
That the krispane kroke to my crownne raughte;
Dressid one me a diademe, that dighte was fulle faire, The kingly ornaments are given to him.
And syne profres me a pome pighte fulle of faire stonys,
Enamelde with azoure, the erth there-one depayntide,
Selkylde with the salte see appone sere halfes,
In sygne þat I sothely was soverayne in erthe:
Than broght cho me a brande with fulle bryghte hiltes, A sword with bright hilt is brought for him.
And bade me brawndysche þe blade, 'þe brande es myne awene:
Many swayne with þe swynge has the swtte levede;
ffor whilles thow swanke with the swerde, it swykkede þe never.'
Than raykes cho with roo, and riste whene hir likede,
To þe ryndes of þe wode, richere was never;
Was no pomarie so pighte of pryncez in erthe,
Ne nonne apparaylle so prowde, bot paradys one.
Scho bad þe bowes scholde bewe downe, and bryng to my hondes He is taken to the wood, and the boughs are made to yield their fruit to him.
Of þe beste that they bare one brawnches so heghe;
Than they heldede to hir heste alle holly at ones,
The hegheste of iche a hirste, I hette ȝow forsothe:
Scho bade me fyrthe noghte þe fruyte, bot fonde whilles me likede, He is bid take freely of the finest.
'ffonde of þe fyneste, thow freliche byerne,
And reche to the ripeste, and ryotte thy selvene!
Riste, thow ryalle roye, for Rome es thyne awene!
And I salle redily rolle the roo at þe gayneste,
And reche the þe riche wyne in rynsede coupes.' The lady draws wine for him out of the stream,
Thane cho wente to the welle by þe wode enis,
That alle wellyde of wyne, and wonderliche rynnes;
Kaughte up a coppe-fulle, and coverde it faire;
Scho bad me dereliche drawe, and drynke to hir selfene: and bids him drink to her.
And thus cho lede me abowte the lenghe of an owre,
With alle likynge and luffe, þat any lede scholde;
Bot at þe myddaye fulle ewyne all hir mode chaungede, But at mid-day all was changed.

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And mad myche manace with mervayllous wordez;
Whene I cryede appone hire, cho kest downe hir browes,
She speaks to him fiercely, and tells him that he shall lose his life.
'Kyng, thow karpes for noghte, be Criste þat me made!
ffor thow salle lose this layke, and thi lyfe aftyre!
Thow has lyffede in delytte and lordchippes inewe!'
She gives the wheel a whirl and sends him flying from the chair, bruised and injured.
Abowte scho whirles the whele, and whirles me undire,
Tille alle my qwarters þat whille whare qwaste al to peces!
And with that chayere my chyne was chopped in sondire!
And I hafe cheveride for chele, sen me this chance happenede.
Than wakkenyde I i-wys, alle wery for-dremyde,
And now wate thow my woo, worde as þe lykes."
The philosophers interpret the dream, and tell Arthur that his good fortune is passed.
"ffreke," sais the philosophre, "thy fortune es passede!
ffor thow salle fynd hir thi foo, frayste whene the lykes!
Thow arte at þe hegheste, I hette the for-sothe!
Chalange nowe when thow wille, thow chevys no more!
Thow has schedde myche blode, and schalkes distroyede,
Sakeles in sirquytrie, in sere kynges landis;
He is to prepare for his end,
Schryfe the of thy schame, and schape for thyne ende!
Thow has a schewynge, *syr* kynge, take kepe ȝif the like!
ffor thow salle fersely falle with-in fyve wynters!
and to found Abbeys in France.
ffownde abbayes in ffraunce, þe froytez are theyne awene,
ffore ffroille, and for fferawnt, and for thir ferse knyghttis,
That thow fremydly in ffraunce has faye belevede;
He is bid take warning from the other kings who had tried the chair.
Take kepe ȝitte of oþer kynges, and kaste in thyne herte,
That were conquerours kydde, and crownnede in erthe;
The first was Alexander; the second Hector; the third Julius Cæsar;
The eldeste was Alexandere, þat alle þe erthe lowttede;
The toþer Ector of Troye, the chevalrous gume;
The thirde Julyus Cesare, þat geant was holdene,
In iche jorne jentille, ajuggede with lordes;
the fourth Sir Judas, the Maccabee;
The ferthe was syr Judas, a justere fulle nobille,
The maysterfulle Makabee, the myghttyeste of strenghes;
the fifth Joshua;
The fyfte was Josue, þat joly mane of armes,
That in Jerusalem oste fulle myche joye lymppede;
the sixth was David, who slew great Goliath.
The sexte was David þe dere, demyd with kynges
One of þe doughtyeste þat dubbede was ever,

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ffor he slewe with a slynge, be sleyghte of his handis,
Golyas the grette gome, grymmeste in erthe;
Syne endittede in his dayes alle the dere psalmes,
Þat in Þe sawtire ere sette with selcouthe wordes;
The two clymbande kynges, I knawe it forsothe,
Salle Karolus be callide, the kyng sone of Fraunce;
He salle be crowelle and kene, and conquerour holdene,
Covere be conqueste contres ynewe;
He salle encroche the crowne that Crist bare hym selfene,
And Þat lifeliche launce, that lepe to his herte,
When he was crucyfiede on crose, and alle Þe kene naylis,
Knyghtly he salle conquere to Cristyne men hondes:
The toÞer salle be Godfraye, that Gode schalle revenge
One Þe Gud Frydaye with galyarde knyghtes;
He salle of Lorrayne be lorde, be leefe of his fadire,
And syne in Jerusalem myche joye happyne,
ffor he salle cover the crosse be craftes of armes,
And synne be corownde kynge, with krysome enoynttede;
Salle no duke in his dayes siche destanye happyne,
Ne siche myschefe dreghe, whene trowthe salle be tryede!
ffore-thy ffortune Þe fetches to fulfille the nowmbyre,
Alles nynne of Þe nobileste namede in erthe;
This salle in romance be redde with ryalle knyghttes,
Rekkenede and renownde with ryotous kynges,
And demyd one domesdaye, for dedis of armes,
ffor Þe doughtyeste Þat ever was duelland in erthe:
So many clerkis and kynges salle karpe of ȝoure dedis,
And kepe ȝoure conquestez in cronycle for ever!
Bot the wolfes in the wode, and the whilde bestes,
Are some wikkyd mene that werrayes thy rewmes,
Es entirde in thyne absence to werraye thy pople,
And alyenys and ostes of uncouthe landis:
Thow getis tydandis I trowe, within tene dayes,
That some torfere es tydde, sene thow fro home turnede;
I rede thow rekkyne and reherse un-resonable dedis,
Ore the repenttes fulle rathe alle thi rewthe werkes!

Of the two kings who were climbing, one should be called Carolus of France;

the other Godfrey of Lorraine, who should recover the true cross.

Arthur is needed to make up the number of the nine noblest.

He shall be celebrated for ever as the doughtiest on earth.

Many clerks shall tell of his deeds.

The wild beasts are wicked men that are worrying his people.

He will have some tidings within ten days.

He is bid to repent and amend.

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Mane, amende thy mode, or thow myshappene,
And mekely aske mercy for mede of thy saule!"

The king rises and puts on his robes.

Thane rysez the riche kynge, and rawghte one his wedys,
A reedde actone of Rosse, the richeste of floures,
A pesane, and a paunsone, and a pris girdille;
And one he henttis a hode of scharlette fulle riche,
A pavys pillione hatt, þat pighte was fulle faire
With perry of þe oryent, and precyous stones;
His gloves gayliche gilte, and gravene by þe hemmys,
With graynes of rubyes fulle gracious to schewe:
His hede grehownde, and his bronde, ande no byerne elles,
And bownnes over a brode mede, with breth at his herte;
ffurth he stalkis a stye by þa stille enys,
Stotays at a hey strette, studyande hyme one;

He sees a man approaching in strange attire,

Att the surs of þe sonne, he sees there commande,
Raykande to Romewarde the redyeste wayes,
A renke in a rownde cloke, with righte rowmme clothes,
With hatte, and with heyghe schone homely and rownde;
With flatte ferthynges the freke was floreschede alle over,
Many schredys and schragges at his skyrttes hynnges,
With scrippe, ande with slawyne, and skalopis i-newe,

who appears like a pilgrim.

Both pyke and palme, alles pilgram hym scholde:
The gome graythely hym grette, and bade gode morwene;
The kyng lordelye hymselfe, of langage of Rome,
Of Latyne corroumppede alle, fulle lovely hym menys,—

He asks him whither he is going,

"Whedire wilnez thowe, wye, walkande thyne onne?
Qwhylles þis werlde es o werre, a wawhte I it holde!
Here es ane enmye with oste, undire ȝone vynes;
And they see the for-sothe, sorowe the be-tyddes;
Bot ȝif thow hafe condethe of þe kynge selfene,

and tells him the dangers of the way.

Knaves wille kille the, and keppe at thow haves;
And if þou halde þe hey waye, they hente the also,
Bot if thow hastyly hafe helpe of his hende knyghttes."

The stranger knight says that he fears no dangers.

Thane karpes syr Cradoke to the kynge selfene,
"I salle for-gyffe hym my dede, so me Gode helpe!
Onye grome undire Gode, that one this grownde walkes!

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Latte the keneste come, that to þe kyng langes,
I salle encountire hyme as knyghte, so Criste hafe my sawle!
ffor thow may noghte reche me, ne areste thy selfene,
Þoffe thou be richely arayede in fulle riche wedys;
I wille noghte wonde for no werre, to wende whare me likes,
Ne for no wy of this werlde, þat wroghte es one erthe!
Bot I wille passe in pilgremage þis pas unto Rome, — He is bound in pilgrimage to Rome.
To purchese me perdonne of the pape selfene;
And of paynes of purgatorie be plenerly assoyllede;
Thane salle I seke sekirly my soverayne lorde,
Sir Arthure of Inglande, that avenaunt byerne! — Then he has to find Arthur of England.
ffor he es in this empire, as hathelle men me telles,
Ostayande in this oryente with awfulle knyghtes."
"Fro qwyne come þou, kene mane," *quod* þe kynge thane,
"That knawes kynge Arthure, and his knyghttes also?
Was þou ever in his courte, qwylles he in kyth lengede? — Arthur demands of the knight who he is.
Thow karpes so kyndly, it comforthes myne herte!
Well wele has þou wente, and wysely þou sechis,
ffor þou arte Bretowne bierne, as by thy brode speche."
"Me awghte to knowe þe kynge, he es my kydde lorde, — He tells him that his name is Sir Cradok, a knight of Arthur's chamber, and keeper of Caerleon.
And I calde in his courte a knyghte of his chambire;
Sir Craddoke was I callide, in his courte riche,
Kepare of Karlyone, undir the kynge selfene;
Nowe am I cachede owtt of kyth, with kare at my herte,
And that castelle es cawghte with uncowthe ledys."
Than the comliche kynge kaughte hym in armes, — The king kisses and welcomes Sir Cradok.
Keste of his ketille-hatte, and kyssede hyme fulle sone,
Saide, "welcome, *syr* Craddoke, so Criste mott me helpe!
Dere cosyne of kynde, thowe coldis myne herte!
How faris it in Bretaynne, with alle my bolde berynes?
Are they brettenede, or brynte, or broughte owte of lyve?
Kene þou me kyndely whatte caase es be-fallene;
I kepe no credens to crafe, I knawe the for trewe."

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Sir Cradok tells him of the evil deeds of Modred.

"Sir, thi wardane es wikkede, and wilde of his dedys;
ffor he wandreth has wroghte, sen þou awaye passede;
He has castelles encrochede, and corownde hym selvene,
Kaughte in alle þe rentis of þe rownde tabille;
He devisede þe rewme, and delte as hym likes;
Dubbede of þe Danmarkes, dukes and erlles,
Disseveride þeme sondirwise, and cites distroyede;

He has levied forces of paynims and infidels,

To Sarazenes and Sessoynes, appone sere halves,
He has semblede a sorte of selcouthe berynes,
Soveraynes of Surgenale, and sowdeours many,
Of Peyghtes and Paynnyms, and provede knyghttes
Of Irelande and Orgaile, owtlawede berynes;
Alle thaa laddes are knyghttes þat lange to þe mowntes,
And ledynge and lordechipe has alle, alles theme selfe likes;
And there es *syr* Childrike a cheftayne holdyne,
That ilke chevalrous mane, he chargges thy pople;

who rob the religious and ravish the nuns.

They robbe thy religeous, and ravichse thi nonnes,
And redy ryddis *with* his rowtte to rawnsone þe povere;
ffro Humbyre to Hawyke he haldys his awene,

He has seized the whole of England and all Arthur's castles.

And alle the cowntré of Kentt be covenawnte entayllide;
The comliche castelles that to the corowne langede,
The holtes, and the hare wode, and the harde bankkes,
Alle þat Henguste and Hors hent in þeire tyme;

He has a fleet of seven score ships at Southampton.

Att Southamptone on the see es sevene skore chippes,
ffrawghte fulle of ferse folke, owt of ferre landes,
ffor to fyghte *with* thy ffrappe, whene þow theme assailles.

But, worst of all, he has taken Guinever, and lives with her as his wife!

Bot ȝitt a worde witterly, thowe watte noghte þe werste!
He has weddede Waynore, and hir his wieffe holdis,
And wounnys in the wilde bowndis of þe weste marches,
And has wroghte hire with childe, as wittnesse telles!
Off alle þe wyes of þis worlde, woo motte hym worthe,
Alles wardayne unworthye womene to ȝeme!
Thus has *syr* Modrede merrede us alle!
ffor-thy I merkede over thees mowntes, to mene þe the sothe."

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Than the burliche kynge, for brethe at his herte,
And for this botelesse bale alle his ble chaungide!
"By þe rode," sais þe roye, "I salle it revenge!
Hym salle repente fulle rathe alle his rewthe werkes!"
Alle wepande for woo he went to his tentis;
Unwynly this wyesse kynge, he wakkenysse his berynes,
Clepid in a clarioune kynges and othire,
Callys theme to concelle, and of þis cas tellys,—
"I am with tresone be-trayede, for alle my trewe dedis!
And alle my travayle es tynt, me tydis no bettire!
Hym salle torfere betyde, þis tresone has wroghte,
And I may traistely hym take, as I am trew lorde!
This es Modrede, þe mane that I most traystede,
Has my castelles encrochede, and corownde hyme selvene,
With renttes and reches of the rownde table;
Has made alle hys retenewys of renayede wrechis,
And devysed my rewme to dyverse lordes,
To sowdeours and to Sarazenes owtte of sere londes!
He has weddyde Waynore, and hyr to wyefe holdes,
And a childe es eschapede, the chaunce es no bettire!
They hafe semblede on the see sevene schore chippis,
ffulle of ferrome folke, to feghte with myne one!
ffor-thy to Bretayne the brode buske us by-hovys,
ffor to brettyne the berynne that has this bale raysede!
Thare salle no freke men fare, bott alle one fresche horses,
That are fraistede in fyghte, and floure of my knyghttez:
Sir Howelle and syr Hardolfe here salle be leve,
To be lordes of the ledis that here to me lenges;
Lokes in-to Lumbardye, that thare no lede chaunge,—
And tendirly to Tuskayne take tente alles I byde;
Resaywe the rentis of Rome qwene þay are rekkenede;
Take sesyne the same daye that laste waste assygnede,
Or elles alle þe ostage withowttyne þe wallys,
Be hynggyde hye appone hyghte alle holly at ones!"
Nowe bownes the bolde kynge with beste knyghtes,
Gers trome and trusse and trynes forth aftyre;

Arthur is overcome by the tidings, and vows revenge.

He calls a Council and tells them the ill news.

They must proceed to Britain at once with all speed.

Sir Howell and Sir Hardolf are left behind to govern Rome and Italy.

Arthur and his best knights journey rapidly towards Britain.

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Turnys thorowe Tuskayne, taries bot littille,
Lyghte noghte in Lumbarddye bot whene þe lyghte failede;
Merkes over the mowntaynes fulle mervaylous wayes,
Ayres thurghe Almaygne evyne at the gayneste;
In Flanders his fleet is assembled. fferkes evynne in-to fflawndresche with hys ferse knyghttes;
Within fyftene dayes his flete es assemblede,
And thane he schoupe hyme to chippe, and schownnes no lengere,
Scherys with a charpe wynde over þe schyre waters;
By þe roche with ropes he rydes one ankkere,
He discovers the fleet of the enemy armed and prepared for fight. Thare the false mene fletyde, and one flode lengede,
With chefe chaynes of chare chokkode to-gedyrs,
Charggede evyne cheke-fulle of chevalrous knyghtes;
And in þe hynter one heghte, helmes and crestes,
Hatches with haythene mene hillyd ware thare undyre,
Prowdliche prutrayede with payntede clothys,
Iche a pece by pece prykkyde tylle oþer,
Dubbyde with dagswaynnes dowblede they seme;
And thus þe derfe Danamarkes had dyghte alle theyre chippys,
That no dynte of no darte dere theme ne schoulde:
Than the roye and þe renkes of the rownde table
Alle ryally in rede arrayes his chippis;
Then he makes ready his ships for the battle, That daye ducheryes he delte, and doubbyde knyghttes,
Dresses dromowndes and dragges, and drawene upe stonys;
The toppe-castelles he stuffede with toyelys, as hyme lykyde,
Bendys bowes of vys brothly þare aftyre,
Tolowris tentyly takelle they ryghttene,
Brasene hedys fulle brode buskede one flones,
Graythes for garnysones gomes arrayes;
Gryme gaddes of stele, ghywes of iryne,
Stirttelys steryne one steryne with styffe mene of armes;

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Mony lufliche launce appone lofte stoundys,
Ledys one leburde, lordys and oþer,
Pyghte payvese one porte, payntede scheldes,
One hyndire hurdace one highte helmede knyghtez.
Thus they scheftene fore schotys one thas schire strandys,
Ilke schalke in his schrowde, fulle scheene ware þeire wedys.
The bolde kynge es in a barge and a-bowtte rowes, and rows round the fleet to see
Alle bare-hevvede for besye with beveryne lokkes; that everything is prepared.
And a beryne with his bronde, and ane helme betyne,
Mengede with a mawncelet of maylis of silver,
Compaste with a coronalle, and coverde fulle ryche;
Kayris to yche a cogge, to comfurthe his knyghttes: He exhorts his knights to be of
To Clegys and Cleremownde he cryes one lowde,— good courage,
"O Gawayne! O Galyrane! thies gud mens bodyes."
To Loth and to Lyonelle fulle lovefly he melys,
And to syr Lawncelot de Lake lordliche wordys,—
"Lat es covere þe kyth, the coste es owre owne;
And gere theme brotheliche blenke, alle ȝone blod-hondes!
Bryttyne them with-in bourde, and brynne theme þare aftyre!
Hewe downe hertly ȝone heythene tykes!
They are harlotes halfe, I hette ȝow myne honnde!"
Than he coveres his cogge, and caches one ankere, goes to his ship, and orders the
Kaughte his comliche helme with þe clere maylis; anchor to be raised.
Buskes baners one brode, betyne of gowles,
With corowns of clere golde clenliche arraiede;
Bot þare was chosene in þe chefe a chalke-whitte maydene, His device is a picture of our
And a childe in hir arme, þat chefe es of hevynne: Lady and the Child.
Withowttene changynge in chace, thies ware þe cheefe armes
Of Arthure þe avenaunt, qwhylles he in erthe lengede.
Thane the marynerse mellys, and maysters of chippis, The sailors busy themselves to get
Merily iche a mate menys tille oþer; the ships under weigh
Of theire termys they talke, how þay ware tydd,
Towyne tresselle one trete, trussene upe sailes,

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Bot bonettez one brede, bettrede hatches;
Brawndeste browne stele, braggede in trompes;
Standis styffe one the stamyne, steris one aftyre;
They sail across the strait and the battle begins. Strekyne over þe streme, thare stryvynge be-gynnes.
ffro þe wagande wynde owte of þe weste rysses,
Brethly bessomes with byrre in berynes sailles;
With hir bryngges one burde burliche cogges,
Qwhylles þe bilynge and þe beme brestys in sondyre;
So stowttly þe forsterne one þe stam hyttis,
There is great dashing together of ships. þat stokkes of þe stere-burde strykkys in peces!
Be thane cogge appone cogge, krayers and oþer,
Grapplings are thrown out. Castys crepers one crosse als to þe crafte langes:
Thane was hede-rapys hewene þat helde upe þe mastes;
A mighty struggle ensues. Thare was conteke fulle kene, and crachynge of chippys!
Grett cogges of kampe crasseches in sondyre!
Mony kabane clevede, cabilles destroyede!
Knyghtes and kene mene killide the braynes!
Castles built on the decks are thrown down. Kidd castelles were corvene with alle theire kene wapene,
Castelles fulle comliche, þat coloured ware faire!
Upcynes eghelynge þay ochene þare aftyre,
Masts fall and kill the mariners. With þe swynge of þe swerde sweys þe mastys;
Ovyre-fallys in þe firste frekis and othire,
ffrekke in þe forchipe fey es bylevefede!
Than brothely they bekyre with boustouse tacle,
Boardings are made and hand-to-hand fights take place. Bruschese boldlye one burde, brynyede knyghtes
Owt of botes one burde was buskede with stonys,
Bett downe of þe beste, brystis the hetches;
Som gomys thourghe gyrde with gaddys of yryne,
Comys gayliche clede englaymous wapene!
The archers of England make havoc among the heathen knights. Archers of Inglande fulle egerly schottes,
Hittis thourghe þe harde stele fulle hertly dynnttis!
Sonne hotchene in holle the heþenne knyghtes,
Hurte thourghe þe harde stele, hele they never!
Than they falle to þe fyghte, ffoynes with sperys,
Alle the frekkeste one frownte þat to þe fyghte langes;
And ilkone frechely fraystez theire strenghes,

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Were to fyghte in þe flete with theire felle wapyne:
Thus they dalte þat daye thire dubbide knyghtes,
Tille alle þe Danes ware dede, and in þe depe throwene! — The Danes of Modred's fleet are all slain.
Than Bretones brothely with brondis they hewene,
Lepys in up one lofte lordeliche berynes;
When ledys of owt londys leppyne in waters,
Alle oure lordes one lowde laughene at ones! — Arthur's lords laugh to see them leap into the water.
Be thane speris whare spronngene, spalddyd chippys,
Spanyolis spedily sprentyde over burdez;
Alle þe kene mene of kampe, knyghtes and oþer, — All Modred's keen men are killed.
Killyd are colde dede, and castyne over burdez!
Theire swyers sweyftly has þe swete levyde,
Heþene hevande on hatche in þer hawe ryses,
Synkande in þe salte see sevene hundrethe at ones!
Thane *syr* Gawayne the gude he has þe gree wonnene, — Sir Gawaine distributes the ships among his knights.
And alle þe cogges grete he gafe to his knyghtes,
Sir Geryne, and *syr* Grisswolde, and othir gret lordes;
Garte Galuth a gud gome girde of þaire hedys!
Thus of þe false flete appone þe flode happenede,
And thus þeis feryne folke fey are belevede!
ȝitt es þe traytour one londe with tryede knyghttes, — But Modred the traitor has a land army of tried knights.
And alle trompede they trippe one trappede stedys;
Schewes theme undir schilde one þe schire bankkes;
He ne schownttes for no schame, bot schewes fulle heghe!
Sir Arthure and Gawayne avyede theme bothene
To sexty thosandez of mene, þat in theire fyghte hovede;
Be this the folke was fellyde, thane was þe flode passede;
Thane was it slyke a slowde in slakkes fulle hugge,
That let þe kyng for to lande, and the lawe watyre; — Arthur's host wait for the tide to make before they land.
ffor-thy he lengede one laye for lesynng of horsesys,
To loke of his lege mene, and of his lele knyghtes,
ȝif any ware lamede or loste, life ȝife they scholde.
Thane *syr* Gawayne þe gude a galaye he takys, — Sir Gawaine wades ashore.
And glides up at a gole with gud mene of armes;
Whene he growndide for grefe, he gyrdis in þe watere,
That to þe girdylle he gos in alle his gylte wedys:

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Schottis upe appone þe sonde in syghte of þe lordes,
Sengly with hys soppe, my sorowe es the more!
With baners of his bagys beste of his armes,
He braydes up-on the banke in his bryghte wedys;
He bids his standard-bearer advance against Modred's host, and not fear their numbers.
He byddys his baneoure, "buske þow belyfe
To ȝone brode batayle that one ȝone banke hoves;
And I ensure ȝow sothe I salle ȝowe sewe aftyre;
Loke ȝe blenke for no bronde, ne for no bryghte wapyne,
Bot beris downe of þe beste and bryng theme o-dawe!
Bees noghte abayste of theire boste abyde one þe erthe;
ȝe have my baneres borne in batailles fulle hugge;
We salle felle ȝone false, þe fende hafe theire saules!
ffightes faste with þe frape, þe felde salle be oures;
May I þat traytoure overtake, torfere hyme tyddes,
That this tresone has tymbyrde to my trewe lorde!
Of siche a engendure fulle littylle joye happyns,
And þat salle in this journee be juggede fulle evene!"
He and his little band charge the whole army.
Now they seke over þe sonde þis soppe at þe gayneste,
Sembles one þe sowdeours, and settys theire dyntys;
Thourghe þe scheldys so schene schalkes þey towche,
With schaftes scheveride schorte of þas schene launces;
Derfe dynttys they dalte with daggande sperys;
One þe danke of þe dewe many dede lyggys,
Dukes, and duszeperis, and dubbide knyghttys;
The doughttyeste of Danemarke undone are for ever!
Thus thas renkes in rewthe rittis theire brenyes,
And rechis of þe richeste unrekene dynttis;
They slay three hundred of the bravest.
Thare they thronge in the thikke, and thristis to þe erthe
Of the thraeste mene thre hundrethe at ones!
Bot *syr* Gawayne for grefe myghte noghte agayne-stande,
Umbegrippys a spere, and to a gome rynnys,
Þat bare of gowles fulle gaye, with gowces of sylvere;
He gyrdes hym in at þe gorge with his gryme[1] launce,
Sir Gawaine kills the king of Gothland.
Þat þe growndene glayfe graythes in sondyre!

[1] *grown* erased from the text and *gryme* written in margin.

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With þat boystous brayde he bownes hym to dye!
The kynge of Gutlande it was, a gude mane of armes.
Thayre avawwarde than alle voydes þare aftyre,
Alles venqueste verrayely *with* valyant berynes;
Metis *with* medilwarde, that Modrede ledys!
Oure mene merkes theme to, as theme myshappenede—
ffor hade *syr* Gawayne hade grace to halde þe grene hille,
He had wirchipe i-wys wonnene for ever!
Bot þane *syr* Gawayne i-wysse, he waytes hym wele
To wreke hyme on this werlaughe, *þat þis* werre movede;
And merkes to *syr* Modrede amonge alle his beryns,
With the Mownttagus, and oþer gret lordys.
Þan *syr* Gawayne was grevede, and *with* a gret wylle
ffewters a faire spere, and freschely askryes,—
"ffals fosterde foode, the fende have thy bonys!
ffy one the, felone, and thy false werkys!
Thow salle be dede and undone for thy derfe dedys,
Or I salle dy this daye, þif destanye worthe!"
Thane his enmye, with oste of owtlawede berynes,
Alle enangylles abowte oure excellente knyghttez,
That the traytoure be tresone had tryede hym selvene;
Dukes of Danemarke he dyghttes fulle sone,
And leders of Lettowe, with legyons inewe,
Umbylappyde oure mene with launcez fulle kene,
Sowdeours and Sarazenes owte of sere landys,
Sexty thosande mene semlyly arrayede,
Sekerly assembles thare one sevenschore knyghtes,
Sodaynly in dischayte by tha salte strandes.
Thane *syr* Gawayne grette with his gray eghene,
ffor grefe of his gud mene that he gyde schulde;
He wyste that thay wondyde ware, and wery forfoughttene,
And what for wondire and woo, alle his witte faylede.
And thane syghande he saide, *with* sylande terys,—
"We are with Sarazenes be-sett appone sere halfes!
I syghe noghte for myselfe, sa helpe oure Lorde;

The vanguard of the army flies.

Gawaine rashly advances against the centre, where Modred is with the Montagus and other great lords.

Gawaine puts a fresh spear in rest, and assails Modred with reproaches.

The host of the enemy, numbering sixty thousand men, surround Gawaine and his little band.

Gawaine weeps and laments for the danger of his men.

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Bot for to us supprysede, my sorowe es the more.
Bes dowghtty to-daye, ȝone dukes schalle be ȝoures!
ffor dere Dryghttyne this daye dredys no wapyne.
He comforts them with promises of blessings in Heaven.
We salle ende this daye alles excellent knyghttes,
Ayere to endelesse joye with angelles unwemmyde.
Þofe we hafe unwittily wastede oure selfene,
We salle wirke alle wele in þe wirchipe of Cryste.
We salle for ȝone Sarazenes, I sekire ȝow my trowhe,
Souppe with oure Saveoure solemply in hevene,
In presence of þat precious prynce of alle oþer
They shall sup with prophets, patriarchs, and apostles.
With prophetes, and patriarkes, and apostlys fulle nobille,
Be-fore his freliche face that fourmede us alle!
ȝondire to ȝone ȝaldsones, he þat ȝeldes hyme ever,
Perish the base slave that yields!
Qwhylles he es qwykke and in qwerte unquellyde with handis;
Be he never mo savede, ne socourede with Cryste,
Bot Satanase his sawle mowe synke in-to helle!"
Then Gawaine grimly grips his weapon,
Than grymly *syr* Gawayne gryppis hys wapyne,
Agayne þat gret bataille he graythes hym sone;
Radly of his riche swerde he reghttes þe cheynys,
In he schokkes his schelde, schountes he no lengare;
Bot alles unwyse wodewyse he wente at þe gayneste,
and rushes into the fray.
Wondis of thas werdirwyns with wrakfufle dynttys,
Alle wellys fulle of blode, thare he awaye passes;
And þofe hym ware fulle woo, he wondys bot lyttille,
He performs mighty deeds of arms.
Bot wrekys at his wirchipe þe wrethe of hys lorde!
He stekys stedis in stoure, and sterenefulle knyghttes,
That steryne mene in theire sterapes stone dede þay lygge!
He rybys þe ranke stele, he rittes þe mayles;
Thare myghte no renke hym areste, his resone was passede!
He fights like a madman.
He felle in a fransye for fersenesse of herte,
He feghttis and fellis downe þat hyme be-fore standis!
ffelle never fay mane siche fortune in erthe!
Into þe hale bataile hedlynge he rynnys,
And hurtes of þe hardieste þat one the erthe lenges!

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Letande alles a lyone, he lawnches theme thorowe,
Lordes and ledars, that one the launde hoves!
3it *syr* Gawayne for wo wondis bot lyttille,
Bot woundis of thas wedirwynes with wondirfulle dyntes,
Alls he þat wold wilfully wastene hyme selfene;
And for wondsome and wille alle his wit failede,
That wode alles a wylde beste he wente at þe gayneste; Like a wild beast he goes on wallowing in blood.
Alle walewede one blode, thare he awaye passede;
Iche a wy may be-warre, be wreke of anoþer!
Than he moves to *syr* Modrede amange alle his knyghttes,
And mett hyme in þe myde schelde, and mallis hyme thorowe;
Bot the schalke for the scharpe he schownttes a littille,
He schare hyme one þe schorte rybbys a schaftmonde large! He wounds Modred in the side.
The schafte schoderede and schotte in the schire beryne,
Þat the schadande blode over his schanke rynnys,
And schewede one his schynbawde, þat was schire burneste!
And so they schyfte and schove, he schotte to þe erthe; Modred falls to the earth.
With þe lussche of þe launce he lyghte one hys schuldyrs,
Ane akere lenghe one a launde, fulle lothely wondide.
Than Gawayne gyrde to þe gome, and one þe groffe fallis; Gawaine strives to finish him with a dagger, but misses his blow.
Alles his grefe was graythede, his grace was no bettyre!
He schokkes owtte a schorte knyfe schethede with silvere,
And scholde have slottede hyme in, bot no slytte happenede:
His hand sleppid and slode o-slante one þe mayles,
And þe toþer slely slynges hym undire:
With a trenchande knyfe the traytoure hym hyttes,
Thorowe þe helme and þe hede, one heyghe one þe brayne: Modred, with a sharp dagger, stabs Gawaine through the brain.
And thus *syr* Gawayne es gone, the gude man of armes,
With-owttyne reschewe of renke, and rewghe es þe more!
Thus *syr* Gawaynne es gone, that gyede many othire; Gawaine, the good man of arms, is gone!
ffro Gowere to Gernesay, alle þe gret lordys
Of Glamour, of Galys londe, þis galyarde knyghtes,
ffor glent of gloppynyng glade be they never!

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Kyng ffroderike offres fraythely þare aftyre,
ffraynes at the false mane of owre ferse knyghte;
King Frederick asks who he was. "Knew thow ever this knyghte in thi kithe ryche,
Of whate kynde he was comene, be-knowe now þe sothe;
Qwat gome was he this with the gaye armes,
With þis gryffoune of golde, þat es one growffe fallyne;
He has grettly greffede us, sa me Gode helpe!
Gyrde downe oure gude mene, and grevede us sore!
He was þe sterynneste in stoure that ever stele werryde,
ffore he has stonayede oure stale, and stroyede for ever!"
Modred tells him that he was Sir Gawaine the good, the merriest, the kindliest, and the bravest of knights! Than *syr* Mordrede with mouthe melis fulle faire;
"He was makles one molde, mane be my trowhe;
This was *syr* Gawayne the gude, þe gladdeste of othire,
And the graciouseste gome that undire God lyffede,
The hardiest of hand, the happiest in arms, the most polished in hall! Mane hardyeste of hande, happyeste in armes,
And the hendeste in hawle undire hevene riche;
Þe lordelieste of ledynge qwhylles he lyffe myghte,
ffore he was lyone allossede in londes i-newe;
Had thow knawene hym, syr kynge in kythe thare he lengede,
His konynge, his knyghthode, his kyndly werkes,
His doyng, his doughtynesse, his dedis of armes,
Thow wolde hafe dole for his dede þe dayes of thy life!"
Modred weeps for the fate of Gawaine. ȝit þat traytour alles tite teris lete he falle,
Turnes hym furthe tite, and talkes no more,
Went wepand awaye and weries the stowndys,
Þat ever his werdes ware wroghte siche wandrethe to wyrke:
Whene he thoghte on þis thynge, it thirllede his herte;
ffor sake of his sybb blode sygheande he rydys;
When þat renayede renke remembirde hym selvene,
Of reverence and ryotes of þe rownde table.
He repents of his wickedness and retreats, He rennyd and repent hyme of alle his rewthe werkes,
Rode awaye with his rowte, ristys he no lengere,
ffor rade of oure riche kynge, ryve þat he scholde;
Thane kayres he to Cornewaile, carefulle in herte,

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Because of his kynsemane that one the coste ligges: — goes into Cornwall,
He taries tremlande ay, tydandis to herkene.
Than the traytoure treunted þe Tyseday þar-aftyre,
Trynnys in with a trayne tresone to wirke,
And by þe Tambire þat tide his tentis he reris, — and pitches his camp by the Tamar.
And thane in a mette-while a messangere he sendes,
And wraite un-to Waynor how the werlde chaungede, — and from thence writes to Guinever,
And what comliche coste the kyng was aryvede,
One floode foughtene with his fleete, and fellyd theme olyfe;
Bade hir ferkene so ferre, and fflee with hir childire,
Whills he myghte wile hyme awaye, and wyne to hir speche,
Ayere in-to Irelande, in-to þas owte mowntes, — bidding her fly into Ireland.
And wonne thare in wildernesse with-in tha wast landys;
Than cho ȝermys and ȝee at ȝorke in hir chambire,
Gronys fulle grysely with gretand teres,
Passes owte of þe palesse with alle hir price maydenys,
Towarde Chestyre in a charre thay chese hir þe wayes,
Dighte hir ewyne for to dye with dule at hir herte;
Scho kayres to Karelyone, and kawghte hir a vaile, — But she goes to Caerleon and takes the veil.
Askes thare þe habite in þe honoure of Criste,
And alle for falsede, and frawde, and fere of hir loverde!
Bot whene oure wiese kynge wiste þat Gawayne was landede,
He al to-wrythes for woo, and wryngande his handes, — Arthur is grieved for Gawaine's rash landing, and follows him wading through the water.
Gers lawnche his botes appone a lawe watire,
Londis als a lyone with lordliche knyghtes,
Slippes in in the sloppes o-slante to þe girdylle,
Swalters upe swyftly with his swerde drawene,
Bownnys his bataile and baners displayes,
Buskes over þe brode sandes with breth at his herte,
fferkes frekkly one felde þare þe feye lygges;
Of the traytours mene one trappede stedis, — He slays ten thousand men in his great wrath. Seven score of his knights are slain.
Ten thosandez ware tynte, þe trewghe to acownt,
And certane on owre syde sevene score knyghtes

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In soyte *with* theire soverayne unsownde are belevede!
Arthur slays dukes and earls,
Thé kyngé comly ov*er*-keste knyghtes and othire,
Erlles of Awfrike, and estriche berynes
Of Orgaile and Orekenay, *þe* Iresche kynges,
The nobileste of Norwaye, nowmbirs fullé hugge,
Dukes of Danamarke, and dubbid knyghtes;
And the enchede kynge in the gay armes
Lys gronande oné *þe* grownnde, and girde thorowe evené!
and makes his way to where Gawaine's men are surrounded,
The riche kynge ransakes with rewthe at his herte,
And up rypes the renkes of alle *þe* rownde tabyllé;
Ses themé allé in a soppe in sowte by themé one,
With *þe* Sarazenes unsownde enserchede abowte;
And *syr* Gawayne the gude in his gaye armes,
Umbegrippede the girse, and one grouffe fallené,
and sees Sir Gawaine lying dead.
His baners braydené downé, betyné of gowlles,
His brand and his brade sehelde al blody be-rovené;
Was nev*er* oure semliche kynge so sorowfullé in herte,
Ne *þat* sanke hyme so sade, bot *þat* sighte one.
Than gliftis *þe* gud kynge, and glapyns in herte,
With groans and tears he kisses the body.
Gronys fullé grisely *with* gretande teris;
Knelis downé to the cors, and kaught it in armes,
Kastys upe his umbrere, and kysses hymé sone!
Lokes one his eye-liddis, *þat* lowkkide ware faire,
His lippis like to *þe* lede, and his lire falowede!
*Þ*an the corownde kyng cryes fullé lowde,—
He bitterly laments the good knight.
"Dere kosyné o kynde, in kare am I levede!
ffor nowe my wirchipe es wente, and my were endide!
Here es *þe* hope of my hele, my happynge of armes!
My herte and my hardynes hale one hym lengede!
My concellé, my comforthe, *þat* kepide mynė herte!
Of allé knyghtes *þe* kynge *þat* undir Criste lifede!
*Þ*ou was worthy to be kyngé, thofe I *þe* corownė bare!
My wele and my wirchipe of allé *þis* werlde riche
It was through his wit that all his conquests were made.
Was wonnenė thourghe *syr* Gawayne, *and* thourghe his witte one!
Allas!" saide *syr* Arthure, "nowe ekys my sorowe!

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I am uttirly undone in myne awene landes!
A dowttouse derfe dede, þou duellis to longe!
Why drawes þou so one dreghe, thow drownnes myne herte!"
Than swetes the swete kynge and in swoune fallis,
Swafres up swiftely, and swetly hym kysses,
Tille his burliche berde was blody be-rowne,
Alls he had bestes britenede, and broghte owt of life;
Ne had *syr* Ewayne comene, and othire grete lordys,
His bolde herte had broustene for bale at þat stownde!
"Blyve," sais thies bolde mene! "thow blondirs þi selfene,
þis es botles bale, for bettir bees it never!
It es no wirchipe i-wysse to wryng thyne hondes,
To wepe als a womane it es no witt holdene!
Be knyghtly of contenaunce, als a kyng scholde,
And leve siche clamoure for Cristes lufe of hevene!"
"ffor blode," said the bolde kynge, "blyne salle I never,
Or my brayne to-briste, or my breste oþer!
Was never sorowe so softe that sanke to my herte!
Itt es fulle sibb to myselfe, my sorowe es the more!
Was never so sorowfulle a syghte seyne with myne eghene!
He es sakles supprysede for syne of myne one!"
Downe knelis þe kynge, and kryes fulle lowde;
With carefulle contenaunce he karpes thes wordes,—
"O rightwis riche Gode, this rewthe thow be-holde!
þis ryalle rede blode ryne appone erthe;
It ware worthy to be schrede and schrynede in golde,
ffor it es sakles of syne, sa helpe me oure Lorde!"
Downe knelis þe kyng with kare at his herte,
Kaughte it upe kyndly with his clene handis,
Keste it in a ketille-hatte, and coverde it faire,
And kayres furthe with þe cors in kyghte þare he lenges.
"Here I make myn avowe," *quod* the kynge thane,
"To Messie, and to Marie, the mylde qwene of hevene,

Arthur swoons for grief; then starts up and kisses the dead knight.

His beard is smeared in the blood of Gawaine.

Sir Ewaine and his knights reproach him.

He excuses himself on account of the greatness of the grief.

He collects Gawaine's blood in a helmet,

and carries away his body.

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Then he makes a solemn vow that he will take no pleasure in the chase till Gawaine be avenged.

I salle nev*er* ryvaye, ne racches un-cowpylle
At roo ne rayne dere, þat rynnes apponne erthe;
Nev*er* grewhownde late glyde, ne gossehawke latt flye,
Ne nev*er* fowle see fellide, þat flieghes w*ith* wenge;
ffawkone ne formaylle appone fiste handille,
Ne ȝitt w*ith* gerefawcone rejoyse me in erthe;
Ne regnne in my royaltez, ne halde my rownde table,
Tille thi dede, my dere, be dewly revengede!
Bot ev*er* droupe and dare, qwylles my lyfe lastez,
Tille Drightene and derfe dede hafe done qwate theme likes!"
Than kaughte they upe þe cors w*ith* kare at theire hertes,
Karyed [it] one a coursere w*ith* þe kynge selfene;

The body was sent straight to Winchester,

The waye unto Wynchestre þay wente at the gayneste,
Wery and wandsomdly, w*ith* wondide knyghtes;
Thare come þe pr*ior* of the plas, and professide monnkes,

and met by a procession of monks.

Apas in p*rocessione*, and w*ith* the prynce metys;
And he be-tuke þame the cors of þe knyghte noble,—

Arthur gives orders that all honour should be paid to the dead.

"Lokis it be clenly kepyd," he said, "and in þe kirke holdene,
Done for derygese, as to þe ded fallys;
Menskede w*ith* messes, for mede of þe saule:
Loke it wante no waxe, ne no wirchipe elles,
And at þe body be bawmede, and one erthe holdene.
ȝiff thou kepe thi covent, encroche any wirchipe
At my comyng agayne, ȝif Crist wille it thole;
Abyde of þe beryenge tille they be broughte undire,
Þat has wroghte us this woo, and þis werre movede."

Sir Wycher advises that he should stay in Winchester and rally his forces.

Than sais *syr* Wychere þe wy, a wyese mane of armes,
"I rede ȝe warely wende, and wirkes the beste;
Soiorne in this cete, and semble thi berynes,
And bidde w*ith* thi bolde mene in thi burghe riche:
Get owt knyghttez of contres, that castelles holdes,
And owt of garysons grete gude mene of armes,
ffor we are faithely to fewe to feghte w*ith* them alle,
Þat we see in his sorte appone þe see bankes."

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With krewelle contenance thane the kyng karpis theis wordes,—
"I praye the kare noghte, *syr* knyghte, ne caste þou no dredis!
Hadde I no segge bot myselfe one undir sone, — Arthur declares that he himself alone is sufficient.
And I may hym see *with* sighte, or one hym sette hondis,
I salle evene amange his mene malle hym to dede,
Are I of þe stede styre halfe a stede lenghe!
I salle hym in his stowre, and stroye hyme for ever,
And þare-to make I myne avowe devottly to Cryste,
And to his modyre Marie, þe mylde qwene of hevene!
I salle never sojourne sounde, ne sawghte at myne herte, — He will never sojourn in city or town till Modred be slain.
In ceté ne in subarbe sette appone erthe,
Ne ȝitt slomyre ne slepe *with* my slawe eyghne,
Tille he be slayne þat hym slowghe, ȝif any sleyghte happene:
Bot ever pursue the Payganys þat my pople distroyede,
Qwylles I may pare theme and pynne, in place þare me likes."
Thare durste no renke hym areste of alle þe rownde table, — None dares to oppose the fierce words of Arthur.
Ne none paye þat prynce *with* plesande wordes,
Ne none of his lige-mene luke hym in the eyghne,
So lordely he lukes for losse of his knyghttes!
Thane drawes he to Dorsett, and dreches no langere,
Derefulle dredlesse with drowppande teris;
Kayeris in-to Kornewayle with kare at his herte,
The trays of þe traytoure he trynys fulle evenne:
And turnys in be þe Treynte[1] þe traytoure to seche, — Arthur follows Modred into Cornwall and attacks him.
ffyndis hym in a foreste þe Frydaye there aftire;
The kyng lyghttes one fott, and freschely askryes,
And *with* his freliche folke he has þe folde nomene!
Now isschewis his enmye undire þe wode eynys,
With ostes of alynes fulle horrebille to schewe! — A vast host of aliens assault Arthur's men.
Sir Mordrede the malebranche, *with* his myche pople,
ffoundes owt of the foreste appone fele halfes,

[1] ? Tamar.

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In sevene grett batailles semliche arrayede,
Sexty thowsande mene, the syghte was fulle hugge,
Alle fyghtande folke of þe ferre laundes,
There were sixty thousand against eighteen hundred. ffaire fettede one frownte be tha fresche strondes!
And alle Arthurs oste was amede with knyghtes
Bot awghtene hundrethe of alle, entrede in rolles;
This was a mache un-mete, bot myghttis of Criste,
To melle with þat multitude in þase man londis.
Than the royalle roy of þe rownde table
Arthur on a charger arranges his men. Rydes one a riche stedes, arrayes his beryns,
Buskes his avawmwarde, als hym beste likes;
Syr Ewayne, and *syr* Errake, and othire gret lordes,
Demenys the medilwarde menskefully thare aftyre,
With Merrake and Menyduke, myghty of strenghes;
Idirous and Alymere, þire avenaunt childrene,
Ayers with Arthure, with sevene score of knyghtes;
He rewlis þe rerewarde redyly thare aftyre,
The rekeneste redy mene of þe rownde table,
And thus he fittis his folke, and freschely askryes,
And syene comforthes his mene with knyghtlyche wordes—
He beseeches them to do well that day and not to fear. "I beseke ȝow, sirs, for sake of oure Lorde,
That ȝe doo wele to daye, and dredis no wapene!
ffighttes fersely nowe, and fendis ȝoure selvene,
ffellis downe ȝone feye folke, the felde salle be owrs!
They are Sarazenes ȝone sorte, un-sownde motte they worthe!
If they are slain they will be taken straight up to Heaven. Sett one theme sadlye, for sake of oure Lorde!
ȝif us be destaynede to dy to daye one this erthe,
We salle be hewede un-to hevene, or we be halfe colde!
Loke ȝe lett for no lede lordly to wirche;
Layes ȝone laddes lowe be the layke ende!
Take no tente un-to me, ne tale of me rekke,
Bes besy one my baners with ȝoure brighte wapyns,
That they be strenghely stuffede with steryne knyghtes,
And holdene lordly one lofte ledys to schewe;

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ȝif any renke theme arase, reschowe theme sone.
Wirkes now my wirchipe, to daye my werre endys! To-day his war ends!
ȝe wotte my wele and my wo, wirkkys as ȝow likys!
Crist comly with crowne comforthe ȝow alle,
ffor þe kyndeste creatours that ever kynge ledde!
I gyffe ȝow alle my blyssyng with a blithe wille, He gives them his parting blessing.
And alle Bretowns bolde, blythe mote ȝe worthe!"
They pype upe at pryme tyme approches theme nere,
Pris mene and priste proves their strenghes;
Bremly the brethemen bragges in troumppes,
In cornettes comlyly, whene knyghttes assembles,
And thane jolyly enjoynys þeis jentylle knyghttes;
A jolyere journé a-juggede was never,
Whene Bretones boldly embraces theire scheldes, The Britons fight furiously.
And cristyne encroyssede theme, and castis in fewtire!
Than *syr* Arthure oste his enmye askryes,
And in they schokke theire scheldes, schontes no lengare;
Schotte to þe schiltrones, and schowttes fulle heghe,
Thorowe scheldis fulle schene schalkes they touche!
Redily thas rydde mene of the rownde table
With ryalle raunke stele rittys theire mayles;
Bryneys browddene they briste, and burneste helmys,
Hewes haythene mene downe, halses in sondre!
ffyghtande with fyne stele, þe feye blod rynnys
Of þe frekkeste of frounte, unfers ere be-levede.
Ethyns of Argayle and Irische kynges
Enverounes oure avawmwarde with venymmos beryns; The vanguard is surrounded by the enemy, and many of them slain.
Peghttes and paynymes with perilous wapyns,
With speres disspetously disspoylles our knyghttes,
And hewede downe the hendeste with hertly dynttys!
Thorow the holle batayle they holdene theire wayes;
Þus fersly they fyghte appone sere halfes,
That of þe bolde Bretones myche blode spillis!
Thare durste non rescowe theme, for reches in erthe,
þe steryne ware þare so stedde, and stuffede wit othire:

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He durste noghte stire a steppe, bot stodde for hyme selvene,
Tille thre stalis ware stroyede be strenghe of hyme one!
"Idrous," *quod* Arthure, "ayre the byhoves!
Arthur bids Sir Idrus rescue his father, Sir Ewaine.
I see *syr* Ewayne over-sette with Sarazenes kene!
Redy the for rescows, arraye thee sone!
Hye þe with hardy mene in helpe of thy ffadire!
Sett in one the syde, and socoure ȝone lordes;
Bot they be socourrede and sownde, unsawghte be I never!"
Idrous hyme ansuers ernestly þare aftyre,—
Sir Idrus replies that he owes all duty to his father, and that he had commanded him not to leave the king.
"He es my fadire in faithe, for-sake salle I never!
He has me fosterde and fedde, and my faire bretherene,
Bot I for-sake this gate, so me Gode helpe,
And sothely alle sybredyne bot thyselfe one;
I breke never his biddynge for beryne one lyfe,
Bot ever bouxome as beste blethely to wyrke!
He commande me kyndly, with knyghtly wordes,
That I schulde lelely one þe lenge, and one noo lede elles;
I salle hys commandement holde, ȝif Criste wil me thole!
He es eldare than I, and ende salle we bothene;
He salle ferkke be-fore, and I salle come aftyre:
ȝiffe hyme be destaynede to dy to daye one þis erthe,
Criste comly with crowne take kepe to hys saule!"
Than remys the riche kynge with rewthe at his herte,
Hewys hys handys on heghte, and to þe hevene lokes,—
Arthur wishes that he might die instead of his knights.
"Qwythene had Dryghttyne destaynede at his dere wille,
Þat he hade demyd me to daye to dy for ȝow alle,
That had I lever than be lorde alle my lyfe tyme,
Off alle þat Alexandere aughte qwhilles he in erthe lengede."
Sir Ewaine and Sir Errard perform great deeds of valour before they are overpowered and slain.
Sir Ewayne and *syr* Errake, þes excellente beryns,
Enters in one þe oste, and egerly strykes;
The ethenys of Orkkenaye and Irische kynges,
Þay gobone of þe gretteste with growndone swerdes,
Hewes one þas hulkes with þeire harde wapyns,

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Layed downe þas ledes *with* lothely dynttys;
Schuldirs and scheldys þay schrede to þe hawnches,
And medillȝs thourghe mayles, þay merkene in sondire!
Siche honoure nev*er* aughte none erthely kyng
At theire endyng daye, bot Arthure hyme selvene!
So þe droughte of þe daye dryede theire hertes,
That bothe drynkles they dye, dole was þe more!
Now mellys oure medille-warde, and mengene to-gedire. The centre of Arthur's army engages.
Sir Mordrede þe Malebranche *with* his myche pople,
He had hide hyme be-hynde *with*-in thas holte eynys,
With halle bataile one hethe, harme es þe more! Sir Modred had been watching the battle, and preparing to attack the king.
He hade sene þe conteke al clene to þe ende,
How oure chevalrye chevyde be chaunces of armes!
He wiste oure folke was for-foughttene, *þat* þare was feye levede;
To encowntere þe kynge he castes hyme sone,
Bot the churles chekyne hade chaungyde his armes; But first he changes his arms to conceal himself.
He had sothely for-sakene þe sawturoure engrelede,
And laughte upe thre lyons alle of whitte silvyre,
Passande in purpre of perrie fulle rych̃e,
ffor þe kynge sulde noghte knawe þe cawtelous wriche!
Because of his cowardys he keste of his atyre;
Bot the comliche kyng knewe hym fulle swythe, But Arthur knows him at once, and points him out to Sir Cador.
Karpis to *syr* Cadors þes kyndly wordez,—
"I see the traytoure come ȝondyr trynande fulle ȝerne;
ȝone ladde *with* þe lyones es like to hyme-selfene!
Hym salle torfere betyde, may I touche ones,
ffor alle his tresone and trayne, alles I am trew lorde!
To day Clarente and Caliburne salle kythe theme to-gedirs, The two famous swords, Clarent and Caliburn, shall this day be tried one against the other.
Whilke es kenere of kerse, or hardare of eghge!
ffraiste salle we fyne stele appone fyne wedis:
Itt was my derlynge dayntevous, and fulle dere holdene,
Kepede fore encorownmentes of kynges enoynttede
One dayes when I dubbyde dukkes and erlles;
It was burliche borne be þe bryghte hiltes;
I durste nev*er* dere it in dedis of armes,

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Bot ev*er* kepide clene, be-cause of myselvene;
Arthur recognises his sword which he had left at Wallingford under the care of the Queen.
ffor I see Clarent unclede, þat crowne es of swerdes:
My wardrop of Walyngfordhe I wate es distroyede;
Wist no wy of wone bot Waynor hir-selvene,
Scho hade *þe* kepynge hirselfe of þat kydde wapyne,
Off cofres enclosede þat to *þe* crowne lengede,
With rynges and relikkes, and *þe* regale of ffraunce,
That was ffowndene one *syr* ffrolle, whene he was feye levyde."
Than *syr* Marrike in malyncoly metys hyme sone,
Sir Merrick fights with Modred and is forced to withdraw.
With a mellyd mace myghtyly hym strykes;
The bordoure of his bacenett he bristes in sondire,
þat *þe* schire rede blode ov*er* his brene rynnys!
The beryne blenkes for bale, and alle his ble chaunges,
Bot ȝitt he byddys as a bore, and brymly he strykes!
He braydes owte a brande bryghte als ev*er* ony sylv*er*,
þat was *syr* Arthure awene, and Utere his fadirs,
In *þe* wardrop of Walyngfordhe was wonte to be kepede;
þare w*ith* *þe* derfe dogge syche dynttes he rechede,
Þe to*þer* w*ith*-drewe one-dreghe and durste do none o*þer*!
ffor *syr* Marrake was mane merrede in elde,
And *syr* Mordrede was myghty, and his moste strenghes;
Come none *with*-in the compas, knyghte ne none o*þer*,
With-in *þe* swyng of swerde, *þat* ne he *þe* swete levyd:
þat p*er*sayfes oure prynce, and presses to faste,
Arthur forces his way to Modred,
Strykes into *þe* stowre by strenghe of hys handis;
Metis w*ith* *syr* Mordrede, he melis unfaire,—
"Turne, traytoure untrewe, *þe* tydys no bettyre;
and upbraids him.
Be gret Gode thow salle dy w*ith* dynt of my handys!
The schalle rescowe no renke ne reches in erthe!"
Then he strikes him with Caliburn and cuts through his shield and into the shoulder.
The kyng w*ith* Calaburne knyghtly hym strykes,
The cantelle of *þe* clere schelde he kerfes in sondyre,
In-to *þe* schuldyre of *þe* schalke a schaftmonde large,
þat *þe* schire rede blode schewede one *þe* maylys!
He schodirde and schrenkys, and schontes bott lyttile,
Bott schokkes in scharpely in his schene wedys;

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The ffelonne with þe ffyne swerde freschely he strykes,
The ffelettes of þe fferrere syde he flasscheſ in sondyre,
Thorowe jopowne and jesserawnte of gentille mailes!
The freke fichede in þe flesche an halfe fotte large,
That derfe dynt was his dede, and dole was þe more
That ever þat doughtty sulde dy, bot at Dryghttyns wylle!
3itt with Calyburne his swerde, fulle knyghttly he strykes,
Kastes in his clere schelde, and coveres hym fulle faire;
Swappes of þe swerde hande, als he by glenttis,
Ane inche fro þe elbowe, he ochede it in sondyre,
Þat he swounnes one þe swrathe, and one swym fallis;
Thorowe brater of browne stele, and the bryghte mayles,
That the hilte and þe hande appone þe hethe ligges!
Thane frescheliche þe freke the ffente upe rererys,
Brochis hym in with the bronde to þe bryghte hiltys,
And he brawles one the bronde, and bownes to dye.
"In faye," says þe feye kynge, "sore me for-thynkkes
That ever siche a false theefe so faire an end haves."
Qwene they had ffenyste þis feghte, thane was þe felde wonnene,
And the false folke in þe felde feye are by-levede!
Tille a fforeste they fledde, and felle in the grevys,
And fers foghtande folke folowes theme aftyre;
Howntes and hewes downe the heythene tykes,
Mourtherys in the mowntaygnes syr Mordrede knyghtes;
Thare chapyde never no childe, cheftayne ne oþer,
Bot choppes theme downe in the chace, it chargys bot littylle!
Bot whene syr Arthure anone syr Ewayne he fyndys,
And Errake þe avenaunt, and oþer grett lordes,
He kawghte up syr Cador with care at his herte,
Sir Clegis, syr Cleremonde, þes clere mene of armes,
Sir Lothe, and syr Lyonelle, syr Lawncelott and Lowes,
Marrake and Meneduke, þat myghty ware ever;

Modred, though wounded, strikes Arthur and gives him a terrible wound in the side.

Arthur with Caliburn cuts off the sword-hand of Modred.

Modred dies.

Arthur declares that his end is too good for him.

Modred's men are defeated and pursued.

Arthur finds the dead bodies of his knights.

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With langoure in the launde thare he layes theme togedire,
Lokede one theyre lighames, and *with* a lowde stevene,
Alles lede þat liste noghte lyfe and loste had his myrthis;
He swoons for sorrow, 4272 Than he stotays for made, and alle his strenghe faylez,
Lokes upe to *þe* lyfte, and alle his lyre chaunges!
Downne he sweys fulle swythe, and in a swoune fallys!
Upe he coveris one kneys, and kryes fulle oftene,—
and bitterly grieves over his knights. 4276 "Kyng comly *with* crowne, in care am I levyde!
Alle my lordchipe lawe in lande es layde undyre!
That me has gyfene gwerdones, be grace of hym selvene,
Mayntenyde my manhede be myghte of theire handes,
4280 Made me manly one molde, and mayster in erthe;
In a tenefulle tyme this torfere was rereryde,
That for a traytoure has tynte alle my trewe lordys!
Here rystys the riche blude of the rownde table,
4284 Rebukkede *with* a rebawde, and rewthe es the more!
I may helples one hethe house be myne one,
Alles a wafulle wedowe þat wanttes hir beryne!
I may werye and wepe, and wrynge myne handys,
4288 ffor my wytt and my wyrchipe awaye es for ever!
All his joy is ended, and he would take leave of life. Off alle lordchips I take leve to myne ende!
Here es *þe* Bretones blode broughte owt of lyfe,
And nowe in *þis* journee alle my joy endys!"
4292 Thane relyes *þe* renkes of alle *þe* rownde table,
The remnants of his men rally round him. To *þe* ryalle roy thay ride þam alle;
Than assembles fulle sone sevene score knyghtes,
In sighte to þaire soverayne, þat was unsownde levede;
4296 Than knelis the crownede kynge, and kryes one lowde,—
He thanks God for the victory, and all the glory which he and his knights had won. "I thanke *þe*, Gode, of thy grace, *with* a gud wylle;
That gafe us vertue and witt to vencows þis beryns;
And us has grauntede *þe* gree of theis gret lordes!
4300 He sent us never no schame, ne schenchipe in erthe,
Bot ever ȝit *þe* overhande of alle oþer kynges:
We hafe no laysere now þese lordys to seke,
ffor ȝone laythely ladde me lamede so sore!

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Graythe us to Glaschenbery, us gaynes none oþer; — He desires to be taken to Glastonbury.
Thare we may ryste us with roo, and raunsake oure wondys
Of þis dere day werke, þe Dryghttene beloved*e*,
That us has destaynede and demyd to dye in oure awene."
Thane they holde at his heste hally at ones,
And graythes to Glasschenberye þe gate at þe gayneste;
Entres þe Ile of Aveloyne, and Arthure he lyghttes, — He enters the Isle of Avelon and is taken to a manor there; for he could go no further. A surgeon is sent for,
Merkes to a manere there, for myghte he no forthire:
A surgyne of Salerne enserches his wondes,
The kyng sees be asaye þat sownde bese he never,
And sone to his sekire mene he said theis wordes,—
"Doo calle me a confessour, with Criste in his armes; — but Arthur desires a Confessor.
I wille be howselde in haste, whate happe so be-tyddys;
Constantyne my cosyne he salle the corowne bere, — He appoints Constantyne, his cousin, his heir.
Alles be-commys hym of kynde, ȝife Criste wille hym thole!
Beryne, fore my benysone, thowe berye ȝone lordys,
That in baytaille with brondez are broghte owte of lyfe;
And sythene merke manly to Mordrede childrene, — Orders Modred's children to be slain.
That they bee sleyghely slayne, and slongene in watyrs;
Latt no wykkyde wede waxe, ne wrythe one this erthe
I warne fore thy wirchipe, wirke alles I bydde!
I foregyffe alle greffe, for Cristez lufe of hevene! — To Guinever he wishes that "if she has well done she may fare well."
ȝife Waynor hafe wele wroghte, wele hir be-tydde!"
He saide *In manus* with mayne one molde whare he ligges, — Then he says "In Manus," and his spirit passes away.
And thus passes his speryt, and spekes he no more!
The baronage of Bretayne thane, bechopes and othire,
Graythes theme to Glaschenbery with gloppynnande hertes, — The Barons of Britain bury Arthur at Glastonbury.
To bery thare the bolde kynge, and bryng*e* to the erthe,
With alle wirchipe and welthe þat any wy scholde.
Throly belles thay rynge, and *Requiem* syngys,
Dosse messes and matyns with mournande notes:
Relygeous reveste in theire riche copes,
Pontyficalles and prelates in precyouse wedys, — Great mourning was made at his funeral.
Dukes and dusszeperis in theire dule cotes,
Cowntasses knelande and claspande theire handes,

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Ladys languessande and lowrande to schewe;
Alle was buskede in blake, birdes and othire,
That schewede at the sepulture, with sylande teris;
Whas never so sorrowfulle a syghte seene in theire tyme!

This was the end of Arthur of the blood of Hector and of Priamus of Troy.

Thus endis kyng Arthure, as auctors alegges,
That was of Ectores blude the kynge sone of Troye,
And of syr Pryamous the prynce praysede in erthe;
ffro thythene broghte the Bretons alle his bolde eldyrs
In-to Bretayne the brode, as þe Bruytte tellys.
Etc. explicit.

Hic jacet Arthurus, rex quondam rexque futurus.

Here endes Morte Arthure, writene by Robert of Thorntone.

R. Thornton dictus qui scripsit sit benedictus. Amen!

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Dagswaynes, *s.* rough coverlets, 3610.
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Encroche, *v.* obtain possession of, 3213.
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"*Endore* it with yokes of eggs."
—(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 37).
Englaymez, *v.* makes slimy or slippery, 1131.
Englaymous, *adj.* covered with slime, sore, envenomed, 3685.
Engowschede, *adj.* swelled, puffed up, 2053.
Engyste, *v.* constrain, 445.
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Fakene, *v.* fettle, set in order, 742.

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Falterde, *adj.* hanging in folds, 1092.
Fande, *v.* try, endeavour, take care, 557, 656.
Fange or faunge, holds, seizes, 425, 1005, 1249.
Farlande, *s.* foreland, 880.
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Fax, *s.* hair, 1078.
Fay or fey, *adj.* dead; 'fay-levede,' left dead, killed, 394, 517, 978.
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Feletez, *s.* fillets, the flesh on the ribs, 1158, 2174.
Felle, *s.* skin, 1081.
Felschen, *v.* freshen, 1975.
Feraunt, *adj.* pleasant, good, 1811.
Fere, *adj.* whole, sound, unhurt, 2795, 3018.
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Ferly, *s.* wonder, 2948.
Ferlyche, *adj.* wonderful, 925.
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Ferrers, *adj.* with iron hoops, 2715.
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Ferynne, *s.* far part, the other side, 1875.
Fette, *v.* fetch, 557.
Fewle, *s.* foil, sword, 2071.
Fewtyre, *s.* the rest which supported the spear, 1366; 'castys in fewtyre,' lays his spear in rest.
Feyed, *v.* mutilated, tore, 1114.
Feyne, *v.* relax, cease, 1147.
Fichene, *v.* pierce, 2098.
Filsuez, *v.* dwells, 881.
Filterde, *adj.* mixed, joined, 780; matted, 1078.
Firthe or frithe, *s.* wood, 1708.
Flay, *v.* terrify, 2441, 2780.
Flayre, *s.* smell, odour, breath, 772.
Fleche, *s.* part, division, 2482.
Flecte, *v.* float, swim, 803.
Flemyde, *v.* burnt, consumed, 1155.
Fleryande, *adj.* grinning, 1088.
Fleterede, *adj.* flitting, flying, 2097.
Flitt, *v.* strike, wound, 2097.
Flonez, *s.* arrows, 2097.
Floyne or floygene, *s.* a sort of ship, 743.
Fluke, *s.* flat-fish, 1088; floke-mouthed, 2780.
Flyschande, *adj.* piercing, sharp, 2141, 2769.
Foddenid, *v.* fed, produced, 3247.
Fome, *s.* foam, smoke, 1079.
Fonde, *adj.* foolish, mad, savage, 881.
Fonde or fonode, *v.* try, taste, 147, 366, 3371, 3372.
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Fore-maglede, *v.* engaged, hardly pressed, 1534.
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For-justede, *adj.* vanquished in fight, 2134, 2896.
Formaylle, *s.* the female hawk, 4004.

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Forrayse, *v.* forays, lays waste, 1247.
Forsey, forsoey, or forsesy, *adj.* of great force, 3301, 3308.
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Foulde, *s.* earth, 1071.
Foundez, *v.* goes, advances, 1228.
Fourtedele, *v.* fourth part, 946.
Foyle, *s.* box, 2705.
Fraisez, *v.* questions, examines, (perhaps) tortures, 1248.
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Frusche, *s.* sudden rush, 2901.
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Furthe, *s.* journey, course, 1525; path, roadway, 1897, 2144.
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Hente, *s.* hold, 1842.
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Herbergage, *s.* lodging, encampment, 3015.
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Hirste or hurste, *s.* wood, 3370.
Hodles, *v.* crawls, 2308.
Hopes, *s.* valleys, 2503.
Hovys, *v.* stay, remain, 377, 713.
Hoursches, *v.* goes headlong, 2110.
Hufe, *v.* rage, fuss, 1688.
Huke, *s.* cloke, 734.
Huke-nebbyde, *adj.* hook-nosed, 1082.
Hulke, *s.* wretch, fellow, 1058, 1085.
Hunde-fisch, *s.* dog-fish, 1084.
Hurdace, *s.* scaffolding, platform, 3627.
Hurdez, *v.* abides, 1010.
Hyely, *adv.* loudly, 1058.
Hyled, *v.* covered, 184.
Hymlande, *adj.* encircling, hemming in, 2503.
Hyngede, *v.* hanged, 281.

Iche, *v.* rush, charge, 1411.
Inmette, *s.* internals, 1122.
Irous, *adj.* angry, passionate, 1329.

Jaggede or joggede, *v.* pierced, 2910, 2892, 2894.
Jambe, *adj.* capering, active (see *Rambe*), 2895.
Japez, mocks, jests, 1398.
Jeryne, *s.* piece of armour; 'jeryne of acres,' armour of Acre, 903.
Joynter, *s.* joints of the armour, 2894.
Justyfye, *v.* do justice to, 663.

Kaunt, *adj.* bold, 2195.
Kayre or cayre, *v.* go, journey, 6, 243, etc.
Kele, *v.* cool, 1839.
Kelle or calle, *s.* cap or coif, 3259.
Kempe, *v.* contend for superiority, 2634.
Kempis, *s.* knights, 1003.
Kenet, *s.* a small hound, 122.
Kerse, *s.* strength, temper of sword, 4195.
Kest, *v.* cast, 118.
Ketelle-hatte, *s.* helmet, 2094, 3996.
Klevys, *s.* cliffs, 2396.
Klokes, *s.* clutches, claws, 792.
Kwne, *v.* give, 1565.
Kyd or kydd, *adj.* famous, 96, etc.
Kyrnelles, *s.* embattlements, 3047.
Kystys, *s.* chests, coffers, 2302, 2336.
Kyth, *s.* country, kingdom, 28, etc.

Lached, *v.* stripped, 1515.
Lade-sterne, *s.* load-star, leading or guiding star, 751.
Lakes, *s.* locks, 2149.
Lagere, *s.* couch, 2293.
Laggene, *v.* tilt, 2542.
Laghte or laughte, *v.* taken, 874, 1817, 1826.
Late or lote, *s.* look, features, 248, 536, 1462.
Lathe, *s.* ease, compliance, 458; "Be now lathe or lette," Be there compliance or opposition.
Layke, *s.* sport, game, 1599.
Layne, *v.* conceal, 2398, 2594.
Layttede, *v.* sought, acquired, held to be in possession of, 254.
Lechene, *v.* heal, cure, 2388.

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Lechyde, *adj.* cut in slices, 188; v. *Lib. Cure Cocorum*, pp. 13, 50.
Lede, *s.* lad, man, 138, etc.
Lemand, *adj.* glittering, gleaming, 2463, 2464.
Lendez, *s.* loins, 1047.
Lenge, *v.* lounge, delay, tarry, 72, 343.
Lesse, *v.* lose, 1599.
Lesse, *s.* lie, 159.
Letande, *v.* looking, 3832.
Letherly, *adv.* vilely, shamefully, 1268.
Leskes, *s.* flanks, 1097, 3280.
Leve, *v.* believe, 1099.
Levere, *s.* encampment, 3079.
Ligham, *s.* dead body, 3282, 4270.
Lire, *s.* flesh, face, 3282, 3955, 4273.
Lokerde, *adj.* distorted, 779.
Los or loosse, *s.* honour, praise, 254, 474.
Lothene, *adj.* hideous, 778.
Lowe, *s.* flame, heat, glare, 194.
Lowrande, *adj.* sad, gloomy, 1446.
Lowttede, *v.* worshipped, bowed down to, 3286.
Loyotour, *s.* embroidery, 3254.
Lufe, *s.* the loof of a ship, 744, 750.
Luffly, *adv.* lovingly, 248.
Lugge or lygge, *v.* lodge, lie, stay, remain, 152.
Lussche, *s.* violence, force, 3849.
Lutterde, *adj.* crooked, twisted, 779.
Luyschede, *v.* lashed out, 2226.
Lyarde, *adj.* disordered, 3281.
Lygmane, *s.* liegeman, 420.
Lympyde, *v.* happened, befell, 292, 875.
Lyth, *v.* listen, 12.

"Thenne watz hit lif upon list to lythen the houndez."
—(Sir Gawaine, 1719.)

Lythe, *adj.* gentle, smooth, 1517.
Lythe, *s.* land, property, kingdom, 994, 1653.
Lythyre, *s.* leader, ruler (?), 23.

Mangere, *s.* diet, keep of a prisoner, 1588.
Manrede, *s.* power, *lit.* homage, 127.
Masondewes, *s.* Maisons Dieu, hospitals, 3039.
Mele, *v.* speak, 382, 679.
Melle, *v.* mingle, communicate, 938.
Menske, *s.* honour, 126.
Menskes, *v.* deserves honour, 1303.
Merke, *v.* go, 427, etc.
Merkes, *s.* boundaries, 1147.
Mett, *v.* dreamed, 3224.
Mofes, *v.* overcomes, 3324.
Moles, *v.* 3057. See *Mele*.
Mone, *v.* shall (Prov. ? *mun*), 813.
Mowe, *v.* may, 3813.
Mysese (? plural of *myx*) *s.* wretches, 667.
Mysse, *s.* evil, wrong, 1315.
Myx, *s.* wretch, 989.

Naye, *s.* (yolke of a nay, for ȝolke of an aye = egg) 3284.
Nedys, *s.* needs, demands, 85.
Neyvesome, *adj.* renowned, 523.
Notez, *v.* make use of, 1815.
Notte, *s.* business, affair, 1816.
Nomene, *v.* taken, 1437.
Nurree, *s.* adopted child, 689.

Oches, *v.* breaks, 2565, 3676.
O-dawe, *adv.* out of days, *i.e.* out of life (see *Dawez*), 3737.

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On-dreghe, *adv.* at a distance, 786, 787.
Orfracez, *s.* embroideries, ornaments, 902, 2142.
Ostayande, *v.* sojourning, 3503.
Overlynge, *s.* superior, ruler, 289, 520.
Ownd, *adj.* laced, slashed, 193.
Owte, *adj.* foreign, 30.

Palle, *s.* fine cloth, 1288, 2478.
Palyd, *v.* ornamented, 1287, 1375.
Pare, *v.* injure, 4048.
Pastorelles, *s.* shepherds, swineherds, 3121.
Paumes, *s.* hands, claws, 776.
Pavys, *s.* a shield, 3461, 3626.
Pavysers, *s.* soldiers armed with the pavys, 3005.
Payses, *v.* force, 3038, 3043.
Peghttes, *s.* Picts, 4126.
Pensels, *s.* small banners, 1289, 2411.
Perrye, *s.* jewellery, 2461, 3462.
Pertly, *adv.* apart, 2918.
Pertyes, *v.* parts, 1925.
Pillion (hat), *s.* priest's, or large hat.
Pilour, *s.* pilferer, robber, 2133.
Plasche, *s.* a marshy piece of ground, 2799.
Plattes, *s.* plankes for seats, 2478.
Plumpe, *s.* crowd, 2199.
Plyande, *v.* working, 777.
Pome, *s.* the kingly globe, 3355.
Pomelle, *s.* small globe at the head of a flag-staff, 1289.
Poveralle, *adj.* poor, labouring men, 3121.
Poyne, *v.* stitch with a bodkin, 2625.
Prys or pris, *adj.* precious, chief, 2, 569.
Pyghte, *adj.* decked, garnished, pitched, 212, 1300, 2478.
Pykes, *s.* points, 777.
Pyne, *s.* lamentation, 3044.
Pynne, *v.* pine, annoy, trouble, 4048.

Qwarelles, *s.* short arrows for cross bow, 2103.
Querte—'in querte,' equivalent to being in life; querte, joy, activity, life, 3811.
Qwarte, *v.* quashed, smashed, 3390.
Qwyke, *adj.* alive, 1736.
Qwyne, *adv.* whence, 3504.

Raas, *v.* tear, snatch, 362.
Racches, *s.* scenting hounds, 4000.
Rade, *adj.* afraid, 2882.
Radly, *adv.* swiftly, 1529.
Radness, *s.* fear, 120.
Raike or rayke, *s.* path, 1525, 2986.
Ramby or jambe, *adj.* prancing, spirited, 373, 2895.
Ranez, *s.* rushes, 923.
Raply, *adv.* quickly, 1763.
Rared, *v.* roared, 784.
Rasches, *v.* rush, go rashly, 2107.
Rathe, rathely, or raythely, *adv.* quickly, soon, 237, 1275.
Raw (on), *s.* in rotation, 633.
Rawnsakes (*imp.*) *v.* search, 3229, 3740; probe, 4305.
Raykede, *v.* rushed, flowed, ran, 237, 1057, 2984.
Raylide, *v.* arrayed, ornamented, 3264.
Raymede, *v.* roamed, made incursion, 100.

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Reched, *s.* jewels, 3264.
Reddour, *s.* violence, eagerness, succour, 109, 485, 1418.
Rede, *v.* advise, 550.
Redyne, *v.* disposed of, 52.
Refede, *v.* deprived, 960.
Rehetede, *v.* received, entertained, cheered, 221, 411, 3199.
Reke, *s.* path, 1041.
Relevis, *v.* rally, 2278.
Remmes or remys, *v.* cries, laments, 2197, 4156.
Renayede, *adj.* renegade, 2914, 3573.
Renye, *s.* renegade, 2795.
Rependez, *v.* hasten, 2107.
Revaye, *v.* rejoice, 3276.
Revare, *s.* river, 62.
Rewe, *v.* have pity, 866.
Rewfulle, *adj.* sorrowful, 1049.
Reynes, *s.* journey, course, 3165.
Rigg, *s.* back, 800.
Rittes, *v.* rends, dashes in pieces, 2138, 3754, 3825.
Rog, *s.* assembly, people? 3273.
Roggede, *v.* rocked? 784.
Romede, *v.* growl, roar, groan, 424, 784, 888.
Roo, *s.* misfortune, evil, 1751.
Roo, *s.* wheel, 3363, 3375.
Roo, *s.* roe-deer, 922.
Rosers, *s.* thickets, 923.
Rosselde, *adj.* sharpened, 2881.
Rowme or rowmme, *adj.* wide, loose, roomy, 432, 1454, 3471.
Rusche, *v.* destroy, overthrow, 1339.
Rusclede, *adj.* russet-clad, 1096.
Ruyde, ruydly, or ruydlyche, *adj.* and *adv.* rude, rudely, fiercely, impetuously, 1049, 785, 1877.
Rybys, *v.* rips, tears, 3825.
Ryfez, *v.* thrusts, rives, tears, 1474, 2914.
Ryghttez, *v.* See *Rittes.*
Ryndez, *s.* thickets, 921, 1884, 3364.
Rype, *v.* search, 3941.
Ryste *adj.* rusty, rough, 1428.
Ryvaye, *v.* hunt, 4000.

Saghetylle, *v.* be satisfied or reconciled, 330.
Sakeles, *adj.* innocent, without blame, 3400, 3987, 3994.
Sale, *s.* hall, court, 82.
Sandismene, *s.* messengers, 266, 1429.
Saughte, *s.* peace, 1548, 3053.
Saynned, *adj.* blessed, cared for, 966, 969.
Schafte, *s.* spear, 2169.
Schaftmonde, *s.* spear length, 2546.
Schake, *v.* hasten, move, advance.
Schalkes, *s.* men-at-arms, soldiers, 1857, 2211, 2333, 2456, 3748.
Schalyde, *adj.* enclosed, 766.
Schathe, scaith, or skaithe, *s.* harm, mischief, 292.
Schawes or shawes, *s.* glades, 1723, 1760, 1765.
Schede, *v.* pour, 2923.
Schenchipe, *s.* disgrace, 4300.
Scherde, *v.* cut, wounded, destroyed, 1856, 2435.
Schiltrounis, *s.* bands, 1765, 1813, 1856.
Schire, *adj.* scanty, 1760; clear, bright, 3845, 3846, 3601.
Schoderide, *v.* shuddered, 2106.
Schone, *v.* shrink, retreat, 314, 1717.

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Schowande, *adj.* bending (*lit.* shoving), 1099.
Schrowde, *s.* dress, 3629.
Schreede, *v.* shred, sprinkled, 767.
Schrympe, *s.* monster, dragon, 767.
Schuntes or schountes, *v.* hesitates, delays, 1055.
Seche, *v.* seek, 3234.
Sektour, *s.* successor, follower, 665.
Segge, *s.* servant, man, follower, 134, 1420, 1422.
Selcouth, *adj.* wonderful, curious, 75, 1308, 3197.
Semblant, *s.* pomp, 75.
Semble, *v.* cope with, meet, 967.
Sendelle, *s.* a sort of silken stuff, 2299.
Serfed, *v.* deserved, 1068.
Sere, *adj.* several, 192, 607.
Serte, *s.* decree, 2927.
Sesyne or seizin, *s.* possession, 3589.
Sewand, *v.* following, 81.
Sewes, *s.* stews, made dishes, 192.
"Poure on the *sewe* and serve it."
(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)
Seyne (should be read *seþne*?), then, afterwards, 192, 464, 939.
Seyne, *s.* saint, 2871.
Seyne, *v.* boiled, cooked, 188.
"In hir own blood *seyn*."
—(Lib. Cure Cocorum, p. 21.)
Sirquytrie, *s.* pride, 3400.
Sittande, *adj.* fitting, becoming, 953.
Sittandly, *adv.* suitably, 159.
Skathelle or scathylle, *adj.* dangerous, 32, 1642.
Skathlye, *adj.* (should be read *skatheles*) without injury, 1562.
Skayres, *v.* frightens, 2468.
Skewe, *v.* rescue, 1562.
Skottefers, *s.* shooters.
Skowtte-waches, *s.* watchmen, 2468.
Skroggez, *s.* stunted bushes, scrub, 1642.
Skyst (should be read *skyft*?), shift, manage, arrange, 32, 1653.
Slakkes, *s.* pools, marshes, 3720.
Slale (should be read *skale*?), crafty, 3118.
Slawyne or slaveine, *s.* a pilgrim's mantle, 3475.
Sleghte, *s.* craft, sleight, 3419.
Slewthe, *s.* sloth, 3222.
Sleygly, *adj.* slyly, cunningly, 2976.
Slomowre, *s.* slumber, 3222.
Slope, *s.* valley, 2978.
Slote or slotte, *s.* pit of the stomach, 2254, 2976. See *Sir Gawaine* and *Glossary*.
Slottede, *v.* stabbed, 3856.
Slowde, *s.* mud, slush, 3720.
Slyke, *adj.* such; 'then was it slyke,' then was there such, 3720.
Snelle, *adj.* quick, swift, 57.
Sope, *s.* a sup or hasty repast, 1890.
Soppe, *s.* company, body, 1493, 3730, 3746.
Spakely, *adv.* quickly, 2063.
Spalddyd, *adj.* shivered, 3700.
Spayre, *s.* spare-rib, 2060.
Spekes, *s.* spokes, 3264.
Speltis, *s.* splinters, stripes, 3265.
Spencis, *s.* consumption, wasting, 3164.
Sprente, *v.* spurted, leapt, 2062, 3701.
Sproutez, *v.* sprawls, 2063.
Stale, *s.* company, band (*lit.* seat), 377, 1355.

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Stamyne, *s.* deck, 3659.
Stereborde, *s.* starboard, 745.
Steryne, *adj.* stern, brave, 157, 377.
Sterys, steers, guides, 917.
Stirttelys (should be read *stightelys* ?, arrays), 3623.
Stokes, *v.* strike, stab, 2554.
Stotais, *v.* abide, delay, 1435.
Stoundys, *v.* are placed, stand, 3624.
Stowndys, *s.* times, 3889.
Stour, *s.* war, fight, 377.
Stowuntyng, *s.* stunting, stopping, 491.
Strates, *s.* streets, paths, 561.
Strekez, *v.* stretches, 1229, 3102.
Streke, *adv.* quickly, 3102.
Strenge, *s.* strong place, entrenchment, 1926.
Struye, *v.* destroy, 561.
Stuffe, *v.* treat, provision, 1932, 2369.
Stye, *s.* path, 3467.
Styghtylle or stightill, *v.* arrange, dispose of, 157.
Sulayne, *adj.* sole, alone, 2593.
Summes, *s.* assemblies, hosts, 606.
Surepel, *s.* cover, case, 3318.
Surrawns, *s.* assurance, treaty, 3182.
Surs, *s.* rising, 1978, 2511.
Suters, *s.* stalls, 501.
Swafres or swayfres, *v.* starts, 3971.
Swange, s. loins, groin, 1129.
Swanke (*pret.* of swinke), *v.* toil, labour, hence strike with sword, 2962, 3362.
Swape, *s.* stroke, blow, 314.
Swarthe, *s.* sward, 1126.
Swayne, *s.* swain, man, 3361.
Swefennys, *s.* dreams, 3229.
Swefnyng, *s.* sleep, dreaming, 759, 812.
Sweperly, *adv.* swiftly, 1128, 1465.
Swelte, *v.* faint, die, 813, 2962, 2983, 1465, 1466.
Sweys, *v.* descends, falls, 57, 1467.
Swier, *s.* squire, 2960, 3704.
Swoghe, *s.* sound, 759.
Swowynge, *s.* sound of running water, 931.
Swtte, swete or swett, life, 2145, 3361. See Glossary to *Alliterative Poems*.
Swykede, *v.* deceived, failed, 1795, 3362.
Swym, *s.* swoon, 4247.
Swynge, *s.* blow, 3361.
Swyngene, *v.* overthrow, hurled down, 1466.
Swyre-bane, *s.* neck-bone, 2960.
Swythe, *adj.* quick, 409, 813, 1128.
Sybbe, *adj.* near of kin, 645, 681.
Sybredyne, *s.* kindred, 691, 4146.
Sydlynges or syddynges, *adv.* sideways, sidelong, 1039, 1243.
Sylande, *v.* gliding, 1297, 3795.
Syte or sytte, *s.* grief, sorrow, shame, 1060, 1305.
Sythyne or sithen, *adv.* afterwards, then, 56, 159, 169, 184.

Tachementez, *s.* appurtenances, belongings, 1568.
Tachesesede, *v.* attached, 821.
Taghte, *adj.* courteous, well-trained, 178.
Takelle, *s.* tackle? 3619.
Talmes, *v.* is disheartened (*lit.* benumb, deaden), 2581.

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Targe, *s.* document, paper, 89.
Temez, *v.* pours, empties, 1801.
Tempest, *v.* act violently, 2408.
Tene, *v.* grieve, 264.
Tene, *s.* sorrow, 1956.
Thee, *s.* thigh, 1846.
Thirllede, *v.* pierced, 1858.
Thole, *v.* suffer, endure, permit, 676.
Thraa or throo, *adj.* bold, 249, 3295, 3296.
Thrawe, *s.* agony, struggle, 1150.
Threppede, *v.* rushed, forced his way, 2216.
Throly, *adv.* fiercely, severely, 2217.
Thrynges, *v.* grips, 1150; struggles, fights, 2217.
Thrystez, *v.* thrusts, 1151.
Thursse, *s.* giant, 1100. (Still used in E. Ang. counties.)
Tide, *s.* season, fitness, right, 275.
Togers, *s.* coats, 178, 3190.
Tolowris, *s.* tiller of a boat (?), 3619.
To-rattys, *v.* tear, rend, scatter, 2235.
Torfere, *s.* torture, trouble, punishment, 1956.
To-stonayede, *adj.* confounded, astonished, 1436.
Towyne, *v.* tow, draw, 3656.
Towne, *adj.* well trained, 178. (Still exists in wan-*ton*.)
Toyelys, *s.* tools, furniture, weapons, 732, 3617.
Traise, *v.* go, 1629.
Traylede, *v.* dragged, drawn, 250.
Trayne, *s.* stratagem, turn, 1630.
Trayste, *v.* trusts, 1987.
Traystely, *adv.* safely, trustily, 1976.
Trete, *s.* row, 3656.
Trett, *v.* treat, 249, 250, 263.
Treunt, *v.* march, hasten, 1976, 2017, 3901.
Trewe, *s.* truce, 3192.
Tristly, *adv.* safely, 731.
Trofelande, *adj.* trifling, 1683.
Trome, *v.* array in order of battle, 3593.
Troufflyng, *s.* idle words, 114.
Trufles, *s.* lies, 89.
Trussez, *v.* pack up, load, 731, 1976, 3593.
Tryede *v.* (read *trynede*), went, 3592.
Tryne or trine (pret. *tron*), *v.* to go in procession or order, 1757, 3193, 3593.
Tydd, *v.* befallen, fared, 3655.
Tykes, *s.* dogs (applied to men), 3643.
Tymbyrde, *v.* contrived, fashioned, 3743.
Tyne, *v.* lose, 2934, 1954.
Tynt (pret. of *tyne*), lost, killed, 272, 770.
Tyte, *adv.* quickly, 737.

Umbeclappes, *v.* embraces, clasps, surrounds, 1779, 1819.
Umbrere, *s.* visor, 943.
Undroune, *s.* nine o'clock a.m. 463.
Unfaire, *adv.* badly, horribly, 1045.
Unfawghte (read *unsaughte*, q.v.).
Unfaye, *adj.* unwounded, alive, 2797.
Unfers, *adj.* weak, feeble, 4123.
Unfoundyde, *adj.* untried, unstable, 2485.
Unfraystede, *adj.* untried, inexperienced, 2737.

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Unfrely, *adj.* vilely, 780.
Unsaughte, *adj.* at strife, 1306, 1457.
Unsaughtely, *adv.* unfriendly, 1501.
Unslely (for *unselely*), miserably, 979.
Unsownde, *adj.* dead, slain, wounded, 3932, 3943, 4295.
Unwemmyde, *adj.* spotless, 3802.
Unwynly, *adv.* sorrowfully, 955.
Upcynes, *s.* pinnacles, turrets? 3676.
Utters, *v.* ushers, conducts, 418.

Vernacle, *s.* the holy picture of Christ supposed to be miraculously emprinted on a handkerchief, 297, 309, 348.
Verrede, *v.* covered, 2573.
Vertly, *adv.* secretly? 3169.
Viage, *s.* journey, march, 2037.
Voute, *s.* mien, expression, 137.
Vyse, *s.* aim, 2612, 2424.

Wache, *v.* watch, 547, 613.
Wage, *v.* engage, hire, 547.
Wagge, *v.* move, lead, 333, 1615.
Wale, *adj.* beautiful, noble, choice, 182? 741, 2148.
Wale, *s.* gun-*wale*, side of ship, 740.
Walkyne, *s.* welkin, sky, 787.
Walopande, *adj.* swift, galloping, 2828.
Walowes, *v.* rolls, 1142.
Wandrethe, *s.* trouble, grief, 323, 384, 2370, 3158.
Wandsomdly, *adv.* sorrowfully, 4013.
Waresche, *v.* recover, be healed, 2186.
Warlow or werlaugge, *s.* warlock, unnatural wretch, traitor, 1140, 3772.
Warne, *v.* deny, forbid, refuse, 700.
Wasterne, *s.* desert, 3234.
Wathe or wawhte, injury, danger, 2669, 3234, 3481.
Wathely, *adv.* dangerously, 2090.
Watte, *v.* I watte = wot, believe, 2224.
Wayfe, *v.* wander, stray, 960.
Waykly, *adj.* weakly, sorrowfully, 697.
Wekyrly, *adv.* badly, 2104.
Welters, *v.* rolls, 890, 1140.
Wenez, *v.* thinkest, 963.
Weredes or werdes, *s.* destinies, fate, 385, 3890.
Werkande, *adj.* aching, sore, 2148.
Werkkes, *v.* aches, 2690.
Werraye, *v.* make war, 546.
Werpe or warpe, *v.* throw out, utter, 9, 150.
Wery, *v.* curse, 699, 959.
Wiet, *v.* know, 420.
Wightenez, *s.* valour, 1806.
Wille, *adj.* lonely, 3837.
Willed, *adj.* astray, 3231.
Wlonke, *adj.* fair, 3155, 3339.
Wodely, *adv.* madly, 2828.
Wodewyse, *s.* madman, 3818.
Wolfe-hevede, *s.* outlaw, 1093.
Wone, *s.* abode, dwelling, 1300, 2472.
Woonde or wonde, *v.* delay, stop, 1615.
Worthe, *v.* be; 'mote ȝe werthe,' may ye be, 4089, 4105.
Wraythe, *v.* thrust, twisted, 1093.
Wrethe, *s.* anger, wrath, 2225.

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Wrokyne, *v.* avenged, 2225.
Wrothely, *adv.* fiercely, 1141.
Wrotherayle, *s.* ill-fate, 3155.
Wrythyne, *v.* struggle, 1141.
Wyderwyne, *s.* enemy, 2045.
Wyes or wyese (sing. *wy* or *wye*), men, 56, 533.
Wyghte, *adj.* quick, 1615.
Wyghte, *s.* man, 959.
Wyghtly, *adv.* quickly, 70.
Wyghtnesse, *s.* quickness, vigor, boldness, 258.
Wylnez, *v.* desires, wishes, 962.
Wynche, *v.* flinch, 2104.
Wynly, *adv.* pleasantly, 3339.
Wynlyche, *adj.* handsome, pleasant, 181.

Ythez, *s.* waves, 741, 747.

ȝapely, *adv.* quickly, 1502.
ȝernez, *v.* holds, keeps, 1938.
ȝermys, *v.* screams, cries, 3912.
ȝernez, *v.* desirest, 1502.
ȝitt, *adv.* yet, 1424, 1435.
ȝoldene, *v.* yielded, 2482.
ȝole, *s.* Yule, Christmas, 1629.
ȝomane, *s.* yeoman, 2629.
ȝorke (read *ȝoske*), cry, sob, 3912.

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